

# WAR SPEECHES

1914-1917

COLLECTED

BY

BENEDICT W. GINSBURG

M.A., LL.D. (CAMB.)

WITH A FOREWORD

*Price Two Shillings and Sixpence net*

OXFORD  
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1917



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BENEDICT W. GINSBURG

M.A., LL.D. (CAMB.)

OF THE INNER TEMPLE AND THE NORTH BN CIRCUIT  
AND OF THE WAR TRADE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT

*WITH A FOREWORD*

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**TO THE EIGHT HONOURABLE  
LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P.  
MINISTER OF BLOCKADE**

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## CONTENTS

**FOREWORD** . . . . . pp. xi-xxxii

### SIR EDWARD GREY

In the House of Commons, August 3, 1914

**BRITAIN ENTERS THE ARENA—SHE PROMISES NAVAL ASSISTANCE  
TO FRANCE**

British Obligations—Great Powers at War—Britain has no Secret Obligations—"Up till Yesterday"—Expert Conversations—Correspondence with French Ambassador—The Present Crisis—British Friendship with France—Our Interests in the Mediterranean—France must know what we intend—Our Position towards Belgium—The Intentions of France and Germany towards Belgium—The Flight of the Belgians to King George—Britain's Stake—The Coward's Attitude—Britain's Obligation to Belgium—No Danger from Ireland—The Issue before the Country . . . . . pp. 1-18

### MR. ASQUITH AND MR. BONAR LAW

At the Guildhall, September 4, 1914

**THE REASONS FOR OUR FIGHTING**

#### MR. ASQUITH'S SPEECH

Had Britain stood aside—Better to Fall than to Fail—The Responsibility—The Magnitude of the Task—More Men for the Army—Territorials Volunteering for Flanders—The Army's Expansion—A Long Fight—The Cause worthy of Britain's Traditions pp. 19-27

#### MR. BONAR LAW'S SPEECH

A Nation united for War—Berlin's Responsibility—Fighting for the Right—The Outrages in Belgium—The Crime comes from the Leaders—Britain not Decadent . . . . . pp. 27-30

### MR. LLOYD GEORGE

At the Local Government Board, September 8, 1914

**THE SILVER BULLET—NEED FOR ECONOMY**

Victory to the Long Purse—No Competition between the District and the State—To relieve Distress—The Value of Staying Power—Victory to the Silver Bullets—Municipalities should Save

pp. 31-3

## MR. ASQUITH

At Edinburgh, September 18, 1914

## CAUSES OF THE WAR

Diplomatic Documents as Evidence of the Causes of the War—  
 German Suggestions of British Insincerity—Pitt vindicated the  
 Rights of Holland in 1793—Gladstone upheld Belgian Neutrality in  
 1870—German Aim of Domination—German Delusions about the  
 British Empire—Mediaeval Barbarism of German Militarism—The  
 Magnitude of our Task—British Supremacy at Sea—Reinforcements  
 from Abroad—Scotland doing well—The Great Opportunity—Mr.  
 ASQUITH'S APPEAL FOR MEN . . . . . pp. 34-42

## MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S SPEECH TO LONDON WELSHMEN

At the Queen's Hall, September 19, 1914, on

## GERMAN BARBARY

War unavoidable without Dishonour—French Self-sacrifice in 1870  
 —The Scrap of Paper—The Straight Road to Barbarism—Lies about  
 Conspiracy—Belgian Outrages—Serbia—The Zabern Spirit—The  
 Story of the Little Nations—Russia's Aid—Britain's Sacrifices for  
 Freedom—The Results of German 'Civilization'—Germany's New  
 Philosophy—The Prussian Military Caste—A Long but Victorious  
 Road—The Part of Wales—The New Europe—What the War will  
 do . . . . . pp. 43-55

## HERR VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG

(The German Chancellor)

In the Reichstag, December 2, 1914

## GREAT BRITAIN TO BLAME FOR THE WAR

Turkey as an Ally—Russia apparently responsible for the War—  
 Britain the Real Aggressor—Britain's Object—The 'Guilt of  
 Belgium'—Britain at War since August 2—The Germ of the  
 Explosion—British Insular Intellect—The *Rapprochement* of 1911  
 —Britain's Secret Negotiations . . . . . pp. 56-60

## MR. BONAR LAW ON A PAGE OF SECRET HISTORY

## THE ACTION OF THE OPPOSITION ON AUGUST 2, 1914

The Sinking of Party—The Unionist Leaders' Letter—The Lessons  
 of History—Conduct in the Commons—The Need for United Action  
 —The Failure of Germany—A Long Struggle to an Assured Future—  
 Success of the Voluntary System . . . . . pp. 61-6

**LORD KITCHENER'S APPEAL FOR MORE MEN****THE NATIONAL REGISTER AS AN AID TO RECRUITING**

The Dominions and their Efforts—Vital Need for Men—German Preparedness—Our Voluntary System—The Great Response to the Call—Appreciation of Voluntary Work—A Further Step needful—A Registration Bill—Danger of Stating Figures—People apparently Indispensable—‘Slackers’ and Civil Ties—The Tribunal of Conscience—The Moral Duty to go . . . . pp. 67–75

**MR. LLOYD GEORGE**

In the House of Commons, December 20, 1915, on

**MUNITIONS : PROGRESS OF BRITISH MANUFACTURE**

The Relation of Munitions to the Problem of War—Early German Superiority—The Machine spares the Man—Gradual Extensions of Department's Control—High Explosives neglected—German Output of Machines—The Demands by the Navy—The Organization of this Department—Business Men as Officials—Department for Discovering Weak Points—The Causes of Shortage—The Components of Shells—Causes of Short Deliveries—Machine Tool Department—The Whole Supply under State Control—Export of Machinery restricted—Orders in the United States—Supplies of Metals—Labour—Shell Components—Woolwich partly under the New Ministry—Records of Output—Subdivision of the Country—Methods of Production: (a) National Shell Factories, (b) Private Firms controlled—American Orders—Summary of Work as to Ammunition—Congestion at Woolwich relieved—The Question of Guns—The Big Gun adopted late—Building the heaviest possible Guns—Machine Guns—Production increased fivefold—Rifles—Trench Mortars—Optical Glass—Design placed under the Ministry—The Question of Economy—The Cost of Production—The Saving—Effect of Control of Metal Market—Aim to develop Home Supplies—The New Factories and their Requirements—Not overdoing it—Dangers of Inadequate Supply—Economize in Cost, not in Output—Conditions of Labour—The Organization of Labour—The Appeal to Patriotism—The Danger of ‘Too Late’—Favourable Auspices—Energy and Resolution Essential . . . . pp. 76–105

**AMERICA AND THE ALLIES****THE HON. JAMES M. BECK**

At the Savoy Hotel, W.C., July 5, 1916

A Message of Goodwill—America's Sympathy with the Allies—Why the United States remained Neutral—The Effect of the Monroe Doctrine—The United States and the Rape of Belgium—America's appreciation of the British Effort—The Interdependence of the Two Branches of our Race—The Aid afforded by the United States—America's Help to the Victims. . . . pp. 106–17

**MR. LLOYD GEORGE**

**In the House of Commons, February 23, 1917, on  
THE RESTRICTION OF IMPORTS**

Tonnage the important Factor—Shipbuilding Capacity—German Submarines—The Shipping Position—Command of the Sea only relative—Dealing with the Menace—Increase of Tonnage Output—Encouragement of Home Production—Timber Question—Home Supplies of Timber—Iron Ore—Food Supplies—The 1917 Harvest—The Farmers' Experience—Prices after the War—Prices and Labour must be Guaranteed—A Minimum Wage—Wages in Ireland—The Old Age Question—No Increase of Rents—Cases where Change in Rent is right—Cultivation to be enforced—The Price of Corn—The Question of Potatoes—Proposed Guarantees—What the Farmers are doing—Labour Substitution—The Saving of Tonnage—Restriction of Imports—Disposable Imports—The Question of Paper—What has been done in France—The Saving Proposed—Food Restrictions—Imports of Manufactured Goods—Alcoholic Liquors—Barley for Brewing—Brewers' Patriotism—Advantages of the Restriction—Speculative Buying Barred—Accept the Proposals as a Whole—Some Injuries inevitable—Sacrifice by those at Home essential . . . . . pp. 118-42

**PRESIDENT WILSON**

**To a Joint Session of Congress, February 26, 1917**

**UNITED STATES SHIPPING TO BE PROTECTED**

Germany Breaks her Promise—War on all Commerce—United States Ships Sunk—No Overt Act as yet—Increased Authority for the President—Suggestion of an 'Armed Neutrality'—Arming of Merchantmen—Insurance of War Risks—The Rights of Humanity to be maintained . . . . . pp. 143-7

**HERR VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG**

(The Imperial German Chancellor)

**In the Reichstag, February 27, 1917, on**

**SUPPLY AND THE WAR TAXES**

The Terms of Peace—The Future of Domestic Politics—The Value of our Monarchical Institution—The Peace Offer and its Rejection—The Submarine Blockade—The Diplomatic Rupture with the United States—Germany's Ancient Friendship for America—Germany's U-boat Policy—Reasons for Unrestricted U-boat Action—Germany's Destruction of Neutral Lives—England as Ruler of the Seas—The Submarine Weapon—England and the Boer War—The Success of the U-boat Campaign—The Military Position . . . . pp. 148-59

**THE OVERSEA DOMINIONS AND THE GREAT WAR****SIR ROBERT BORDEN AND LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SMUTS****At the House of Commons, April 2, 1917****SIR ROBERT BORDEN'S SPEECH**

The Dominion's Effort—The Enemy's Last Throw—German Desperation—Plans for the Future—The Imperial War Cabinet—Its Objects . . . . . pp. 160-4

**GENERAL SMUTS'S SPEECH**

Britain's Development for Peace—The Effort of the Dominions—South Africa's Position—Justice, not Militarism, rules the World—A Serious Position—The Submarine Campaign—The Future Constitution of the Empire—The Daughter Nations. . . . pp. 164-9

**MR. WILSON'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS****April 3, 1917****THE UNITED STATES TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE ENTENTE**

An Extraordinary Session—German Submarine Policy—The Last Vestige of Restraint gone—International Law swept aside—Germans now 'Hostes Humani Generis'—Arming Merchantmen for Self-defence—Dealt with on Sight—German Counter-threat—United States must Fight—to co-operate with the Entente—Half a Million Men to be Raised—Supplies for Allies to be maintained—The Nation's Motives—to fight for Democracies and Peace—Autocracy the Sole Foe—The Aim of the Military Oligarchy—Plans of Deception—Russia's Blow for Freedom—German Ambassador's Guilt—German Intrigues with Mexico—The Rights of the People—Austria-Hungary has not attacked the United States—No Enmity against the People of Germany—The German Population of the United States—Disloyalty will be repressed—Right more precious than Peace . . . . . pp. 170-80

**LORD ROBERT CECIL****ON****NO IMPERIALISTIC CONQUEST OR AGGRANDIZEMENT****The Debate : LORD ROBERT CECIL'S SPEECH**

The Unfortunate Effect of the Amendment—The Disease of Omnipotence—The Italian Socialists—The German Socialists—The Russian Revolution—New Russia and Old Treaties—H.M. Government and the Russian Revolution—The Meaning of 'Annexation'—The Armenian Question—Germany as a Colonizing Power—The Question of Poland and other Provinces—The Question of Indemnity—Mr. Miliukoff's Note—The Question of Turkey—The Time for Negotiations—Peace must be on Just and Durable Terms . . . pp. 181-94

I TAKE pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to the Proprietors and Editor of *The Times* for the courtesy they have shown in allowing me to reproduce the majority of the speeches herein contained. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech of 27th February 1917 is translated from the *Berliner Tageblatt* (without permission). Those speeches made in the House of Commons are taken from Hansard, and for the rest I thank *The Times*.

BENEDICT W. GINSBURG.

12 KING'S BENCH WALK,  
TEMPLE, E.C.  
*July 1917.*

# *WAR SPEECHES 1914-1917*

## **FOREWORD**

It has long been established on irrefutable evidence that the murder of the Austrian Archduke in June 1914, though ostensibly the breaking of the twig which launched the avalanche of the world-war in the August following, was really but an excuse for the carrying out of plans which had been maturing for at least two previous decades.

Signor Giolitti in his speech before the Italian Chamber of Deputies on the 5th December 1914 disposed, once and for all, of the idea that the murder of the Austrian Archduke and his wife was more than a pretext for Austria's attack on Serbia, if, indeed, any one remained to be convinced on the point. In the course of his speech he said :

' During the Balkan War, on the 9th August 1913, about a year before the present war broke out, during my absence from Rome, I received from my hon. colleague, Signor di San Giuliano, the following telegram :

" Austria has communicated to us and to Germany her intention of taking action against Servia, and defines such action as defensive, hoping to bring into operation the *casus foederis* of the Triple Alliance, which, on the contrary, I believe to be inapplicable. [Sensation.]

" I am endeavouring to arrange for a combined effort with Germany to prevent such action on the part of Austria, but it may become necessary to state clearly that we do not consider such action, if it should be taken, as defensive, and that, therefore, we do not consider that the *casus foederis* arises." ' 1

Apparently the refusal of Italy to be drawn into war on such a pretext caused the conspirators to defer their action for another year, when the position of the Entente Powers seemed less favourable.

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, published by authority, 1915, p. 401.

A study of the speeches from which a selection has been made in this volume, tends to show how little at the beginning of the war Germany's plot against the freedom of mankind and her intention to spare no means to destroy civilization as we have known it, were realized even by those who are assumed to be familiar with the most intimate details of foreign affairs.

That July 1914 was long fixed for the beginning of her triumphant progress over the nations, is now abundantly clear. By that date the widening of the Kiel Canal for the passage of the largest modern battleships would be complete, and significant facts pointed to an immediate move. Amongst these may be mentioned the sudden diminution of her shipbuilding programme for 1912, whence it was apparent that she was desirous of saving expenditure on ships which could not be completed in time for use in the fray. Shipbuilding on a large scale has no doubt been accomplished by her since August 1914, but that does not weaken the significance of the interruption of her programme, for on all sides it is admitted that her intention and belief was that the first stage of her triumph—the overthrow of France and Russia—would be accomplished in three months. As M. Jules Cambon wrote in May 1913, the intention of the German General Staff is to act by surprise—‘ We must put on one side ’, said General von Moltke, ‘ all commonplaces as to the responsibility of the aggressor. When war has become necessary it is essential to carry it on in such a way as to place all the chances in one’s own favour. Success alone justifies war. Germany cannot and ought not to leave Russia time to mobilize, for she would then be obliged to maintain on her Eastern frontier so large an army that she would be placed in a position of equality, if not of inferiority, to that of France.’<sup>1</sup> It was only when her programme broke down and Berlin realized that she was in for a protracted struggle, that a new shipbuilding programme was planned and put into execution. Again, there were several financial portents which should have been read by those

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, published by authority, 1915, p. 138.

who had eyes to see and brains to comprehend. Much of the expenditure on the new navy was met out of loans—a convenient system, but one which is hardly capable of indefinite continuance. It therefore points to a speedy crisis, which, in the German view, could only be the effective use of the weapon which was being bought on credit. There was, too, a levy of fifty million sterling on the capital of the wealthy subjects of the Kaiser. Such forced contributions, unprecedented in the modern history of States at peace, could only have been justified by the intention to use the proceeds for the finishing touches to the vast edifice planned for aggression, and no doubt those at the head of affairs in the Wilhelmstrasse satisfied themselves and their fellow conspirators by saying that the Fatherland, successful in its attacks on its neighbours, would receive its return a thousandfold into its bosom. The wealth of France, Russia, England, and the United States would have to pay indemnities calculated on the scale on which Belgium has been robbed and drained, whilst the natural resources of India, Canada, and Australia would also form magnificent fields for exploitation with the capital which had been extracted from the established nations on whose possessions the Kaiser had cast his covetous eyes. Finally, one should mention the fact of the intercepted letter to the small German cruiser which was in dry dock at Capetown at the outbreak of the war. This letter was written before the tragedy at Serajevo, and containing as it did, orders for the commander to meet German colliers at a given rendezvous in the Atlantic, is sufficient proof, if further proof were needed, of the deliberate intention to throw down the gage of battle.

When we realize all this, the memorable speech of Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons on the 3rd August 1914 has an additional interest. The quiet and restrained periods in which the Foreign Minister set out the international position, though bearing in every sentence the mark of his appreciation of the gravity of the step that was to be taken, treat the H'm as an ordinary and decent foe. He tells us of the possible violation

by Germany of the neutrality of Belgium. Indeed, he has to admit that the neutrality may have been actually broken, difficult as it seems to him to believe that Germany could have so far forgotten her pledges. But the main subject of his speech is the need for naval assistance to France. He shows how, in consequence of the Entente between this country and her nearest neighbour, the fleet of France had been concentrated in the Mediterranean and her northern and western shores had been left unprotected and open to attack by a northern Power. He urged upon the House that we were under a moral obligation to defend the French coast. For the then state of things was due to the reliance of the French Government upon their friendship with us. And it was not right that France should suffer from the exposed position in which she found herself through her trust in British honour. But all that seems to have been contemplated at that moment was that we should give naval support to France in the event of her needing it.

Mr. Bonar Law's speech, on 'A Page of Secret History', on the 18th December 1914, is worthy of record because it shows how, previous to his address to the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey had been assured by the leaders of the Opposition that His Majesty's Government would be supported by both the great parties in the House in their vindication of the honour of Britain and the fulfilment of the obligations which had been solemnly undertaken by this country.

No one at that time seems to have realized either England's danger from an attack when France should have been overthrown by the rush of the Kaiser's hosts, or the necessity that within a few days we should have to land the whole of our expeditionary force on French soil. Above all, there were no suggestions that the 'contemptible little army' which achieved undying fame by its sacrifices on the Marne and the Aisne, would grow in a comparatively few months into a host, large, well trained, and overwhelmingly equipped—a host which by slow pressure is already causing the German hordes to retreat from the possessions which for over two years they

have been patiently engaged in rendering, as they believed, impregnable.

The famous reference of the Imperial Chancellor to the treaty guarantee by Germany of Belgium's neutrality as 'only a scrap of paper' was not contained in his speech to the Reichstag. It occurred in his final interview with His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, Sir E. Goschen, and is reported by him in his dispatch to the Foreign Office of 4th August, 1914. It has since been pointed out that the now famous phrase is to be found in a little book, *Der Europäische Krieg von 1913*, by Paul Baumann, published at Charlottenburg in 1912. At page 5 of his forecast Herr Baumann writes, 'As the Powers guaranteeing the independence of both these small States were involved in war amongst themselves, the guarantees became "a scrap of paper", without practical value,'—these small States in this hypothetical story were Holland and Belgium. At a much later stage—in January 1915, when he had appreciated the world's horror of his callous abandonment of the solemn obligations of his predecessors in office—Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg tried to explain away his use of the phrase. He submitted to an interview at the General Field Head-quarters of the German Army and, for the benefit of the United States public, whom it was then desirable to conciliate, told the correspondent of the Associated Press that he was surprised to learn that his phrase, 'a scrap of paper', which he had used in his last conversation with the British Ambassador in reference to the Belgian neutrality treaty, should have caused such an unfavourable impression in the United States. The expression, he affirmed, was used in quite another connexion and meaning from that implied in Sir Edward Goschen's report, and that the turn given to it in the biased comment of our (Germany's) enemies is undoubtedly responsible for this impression. Then he went on to explain that the conversation with Sir E. Goschen took place on the 4th August when he had just declared in the Reichstag that only dire necessity, only the struggle for existence, compelled Germany to march through Belgium; but

he professed that Germany was ready to make compensation for the wrong committed. Then he hinted at what Germany has since alleged—but without the shadow of real proof—that Belgium had long before abandoned its neutrality in its relations with England. But after referring to Mr. Gladstone's speech in 18<sup>67</sup> on Belgian neutrality—the speech from which Sir Edward Grey had quoted in the House of Commons on the 3rd August 1914—the Imperial Chancellor declared that England only drew the sword because she believed that her own interests demanded it. Just for Belgian neutrality she would never have entered the war.

'That is what I meant when I told Sir E. Goschen, in the last interview, when we sat down to talk the matter over privately man to man, that among the reasons which impelled England into war, the Belgian neutrality treaty had for her only the value of a scrap of paper. I may have been a bit excited and aroused. Who would not have been at seeing the hopes and work of the whole period of my Chancellorship going for naught? I recalled to the Ambassador my efforts for years to bring about an understanding between England and Germany, an understanding which I reminded him would make a European war impossible and have absolutely guaranteed the peace of Europe. Such understanding would have formed the basis on which we could have approached the United States as a third partner. But England had not taken up this plan, and through its entry into the war had destroyed for ever the hope of its fulfilment. In comparison with such momentous consequences was not the treaty a scrap of paper?'

It will be seen that the use of the phrase is not denied. Viewed in conjunction with the Chancellor's speech in the Reichstag—when he asserted that it was dire necessity which compelled Germany to march through Belgium—it may be taken for granted, quite apart from any deduction to be drawn from the known character of the two men, that H.M. Ambassador's version is the true one.<sup>1</sup> The man who was

<sup>1</sup> Sir Edward Goschen's report made at the time of his interview with the Imperial Chancellor may usefully be set out with the Chancellor's own explanation. Sir Edward Goschen had had an unsatisfactory interview with Herr von Jagow, the German Secretary of State, as regards the danger which was threatening Belgium, on the 4th Augt.

Herr von Jagow told H.M. Ambassador that to his great regret he

responsible for the outrage upon the *Lusitania* would not see anything objectionable in the denunciation of a solemn treaty until he learnt that a powerful neutral, whose alliance he sought, was offended by the declaration.

The absurdity of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's assertion that he sought the friendship of Britain and France has been demonstrated by the disclosures which from time to time have been made of the attempts to foster strikes in England, to promote rebellion in Ireland, to create rebellion in India and South Africa, and to encourage Australia to cut the painter. The United States has manifested by the attempts to arouse Mexican and Central American troubles and to involve

could give no other answer than what he had said to him earlier in the day, namely, 'that he saw it necessary that the Imperial troops should advance through Belgium.' Sir Edward said he would take to go and see the Chancellor. He went the same afternoon, and wrote, on the same date, to Sir Edward Grey: 'I found the Chancellor very excited. His Excellency at once began a harangue which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that "the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree. Just for a word 'neutrality'—a word which in war time has so often been disregarded, just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing but friends with her. . . ." He "held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events which might happen". I [Sir E. G.] [schon] protested strongly against that statement and said that Jagow wished me to understand a matter of life and death to get and violate the latter's neutrality that it was, so to speak, a matter of life and death "for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could any one have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said, "But at what price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?" I hinted to his Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements, but his Excellency was so excited, so evidently overcome by the news of our action, and so little disposed to hear reasons, that I refrained from adding fuel to the flame by further argument.' *Collected Diplomatic Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, published by authority, 1915, No. 160, pp. 110 and 111.

even Japan in attacks upon the territories of the United States.

One of the most valuable indications of German aims was the *Secret Memorandum on the Strengthening of the German Army*, transmitted by M. Etienne, French Minister of War, to M. Jonnart, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in April 1913. The document in question was dated Berlin, 19th March 1913, and begins with :

*'I. A General Memorandum on the New Military Laws.'*

Then follows :

*'II. Aim and Obligations of our National Policy, of our Army, and of the Special Organizations for Army Purposes.'*

'Our new Army law is only an extension of the military education of the German nation. Our ancestors of 1813 made greater sacrifices. It is our sacred duty to sharpen the sword that has been put into our hands and to hold it ready for defence as well as for offence. WE MUST ALLOW THE IDEA TO SINK INTO THE MINDS OF OUR PEOPLE THAT OUR ARMAMENTS ARE AN ANSWER TO THE ARMAMENTS AND POLICY OF THE FRENCH. We must accustom them to think that an offensive war is a necessity on our part, in order to combat the provocations of our adversaries. We must act with prudence so as not to arouse suspicion, and to avoid the crises which might injure our economic existence. We must so manage matters that under the heavy weight of powerful armaments, considerable sacrifices, and strained political relations, an outbreak should be considered as a relief, because after it would come decades of peace and prosperity, as after 1870. We must prepare for war from the financial point of view : there is much to be done in this direction. We must not arouse the distrust of our financiers, but there are many things that cannot be concealed.'

'We must not be anxious about the fate of our colonies. The final result in Europe will settle their position. On the other hand, we must stir up trouble in the north of Africa and in Russia. It is a means of keeping the forces of the enemy engaged. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that we should open up relations, by means of well-chosen agents, with influential people in Egypt, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco, in order to prepare the measures which would be necessary in the case of a European war. Of course in case of war we should openly recognize these secret allies ; and on the conclusion of peace we should secure to them the advantages which they had gained. These aims are capable of realization. The first attempt which was made some years ago opened up for us the desired relations.'

Unfortunately these relations were not sufficiently consolidated. Whether we like it or not it will be necessary to resort to preparations of this kind, in order to bring a campaign rapidly to a conclusion.

'Risings provoked in time of war by political agents need to be carefully prepared and by material means. They must break out simultaneously with the destruction of the means of communication ; they must have a controlling head, to be found amongst the influential leaders, religious or political. The Egyptian School is particularly suited to this purpose ; more and more it serves as a bond between the intellectuals of the Mohammedan world.

'However this may be, we must be strong in order to annihilate at one powerful swoop our enemies in the east and west. But in the next European war it will be necessary also that the small States should be forced to follow us, or be subdued. In certain conditions their armies and their fortified places can be rapidly conquered or neutralized ; this would probably be the case with Belgium and Holland, so as to prevent our enemy in the west from gaining territory which they could use as a base of operations against our flank. In the north we have nothing to fear from Denmark or Scandinavia, especially as in any event we shall provide for the concentration of a strong northern army, capable of replying to any menace from this direction. In the most unfavourable case, Denmark might be forced by Great Britain to abandon her neutrality ; but by this time the decision would already have been reached both on land and on sea. Our northern army, the strength of which could be largely increased by Dutch formations, would oppose a very active defence to any offensive measures from this quarter.

'In the south, Switzerland forms an extremely solid bulwark, and we can rely on her energetically defending her neutrality against France, and thus protecting our flank.

'As was stated above, the situation with regard to the small States on our north-western frontiers cannot be viewed in quite the same light. This will be a vital question for us, and our aim must be to take the offensive with a large superiority from the first days. For this purpose it will be necessary to concentrate a large army, followed up by strong Landwehr formations, which will induce the small States to follow us, or at least to remain inactive in the theatre of operations, and which would crush them in the event of armed resistance. If we could induce these States to organize their system of fortification in such a manner as to constitute an effective protection for our flank, we could abandon the proposed invasion. But for this, army reorganization, particularly in Belgium, would be necessary in order that it might really guarantee an effective resistance. If, on the contrary, their defensive organization was

established against us, thus giving definite advantage to our adversary in the west, we could in no circumstances offer Belgium a guarantee for the security of her neutrality. Accordingly a vast field is opened to our diplomacy to work in this country in the line of our interests.

'The arrangements made with this end in view allow us to hope that it will be possible to take the offensive immediately after the concentration of the Army of the Lower Rhine. An ultimatum with a short time-limit, to be followed immediately by invasion, would allow a sufficient justification for our action in international law. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

This document is worthy of attention for several reasons:

(a) We see that though generally reference is made to the 'enemy in the west'—which might be assumed to be France only—several indications point to Britain as being an intended foe. The temporary loss of the Colonies could hardly be anticipated unless the sea power of Britain was ranged against the Germany Navy.

(b) Brewing mischief in Egypt, again, would be an underbelly blow at Britain, whilst

(c) in relation to the position of Denmark, specific mention is made of Great Britain's possible tactics, and

(d) in regard to Holland, there is no French frontier which marches with the Dutch, and therefore the suggestion that 'our enemy in the west' might gain 'territory which they could use against our flank' seems clearly to contemplate war with Britain. For we—if we regarded the rights of little nations from the German point of view—might have thrown a military force on to the Dutch coasts.

(e) In 1913 some little respect for the form of international law was still to be found at the Wilhelmstrasse. For though the Naboth's vineyard of Belgium—and, if desirable, that of Holland too—was to be seized, steps were to be taken to give the action some appearance of legality.

(f) Again the advantages of the sudden blow are extolled, and again the policy of coercing the small States is declared,

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, published by authority, 1915, pp. 131 et seq.

though the weapon of frightfulness is not yet revealed, possibly because the minds of the German people were not yet sufficiently brutalized to make it certain that it would be acceptable to them.

And above all, it is interesting to note that the docile German was to be made to believe that the French were the aggressors. The whole document is couched in the language of those who look upon the contemplated war, not as a defensive measure, but as an adventure which, properly exploited, should prove in every way remunerative to the undertakers.

The extreme agitation of the Chancellor at that celebrated interview is referred to both by him and by Sir Edward Goschen, and, indeed, it is quite understandable that he should have been, as he said, much disturbed by the entry of Britain at that particular moment. He and the Imperial Government had been repeatedly assured by those in whose reports they placed the fullest confidence, that the internal condition of England and the state of Ireland were such as to preclude any assistance on the part of Britain to the Continental Powers whom Germany intended to attack. As regards France and Russia themselves, the moment was singularly opportune, as both countries were unprepared and were devoting themselves to the reorganization of their military systems. The German plan was to defeat France by a sudden blow whereby Paris, Calais, and Dunkirk would be seized, and then to swing back against Russia, whose mobilization was admittedly far slower than that of her Western Ally. Having overcome these two great nations without difficulty, the victorious Teutons would have attacked England, their naval power being doubled by the addition of the fleets of their victims. The failure of these plans owing to the vigorous methods of the British Cabinet must have been a severe shock to the Wilhelmstrasse, and one cannot be surprised at the Chancellor's agitation.

By the beginning of September, when Mr. Asquith and Mr. Bonar Law addressed the citizens of London at Guildhall, German aims and German methods were beginning to be

realized. The violation of the neutrality of Belgium had been followed up by 'countless outrages suffered by, and buccaneering levies exacted from, the unoffending civil population', and 'the greatest crime committed against civilization and culture since the Thirty Years' War—the sack of Louvain'. Mr. Asquith carried his hearers with him when he declared that 'sooner than be a silent witness, which means a willing accomplice, of this tragic triumph of force over law and of brutality over freedom, I would see this country of ours blotted out of the pages of history'. It was now recognized that Germany had been preparing for years to crush the independence and the autonomy of the free States of Europe, and that she, and she alone, was to blame for the catastrophe which had burst over the world. It was beginning to be recognized that the task before us was a large one, and that there would be great demands for men for the army, and for money to carry on the fight. The Oversea Nations were making our cause their own, and Lord Kitchener had called for recruits for the army. The response to the Secretary for War had given cause for congratulation. It had already brought in over a quarter of a million men and the number of units in the Territorial Force who had volunteered for foreign service was considered most satisfactory.

Attention may well be paid to Mr. Lloyd George's speech (when still Chancellor of the Exchequer) to the representatives of the Association of Municipal Corporations. The speech was made within six weeks of the outbreak of hostilities. It is evident from what passed that those who sought the interview had failed to realize the immediate effect of a modern war on the condition of the people of the country. They sought to have money spent on public works to alleviate local distress. Their object was a good one, and had there been any occasion for the demand it were well for them to have anticipated and provided for the trouble. But they entirely failed to realize that a war of nations in the twentieth century meant employment of one sort or another for every able-bodied person in the

land : some as munition workers, some as soldiers and sailors, and others in substitution in necessary labours for those who had been taken to fill the places of men more immediately concerned in the fighting. This is not the place to go into economic questions, and to discuss future effects ; but the immediate result of Britain's entry into the struggle has been to provide work, at wages at least nominally higher than those previously ruling, for every one who is willing and able to take it. Mr. Lloyd George already was convinced of the value of staying power in view of the knowledge that he had attained of the costliness of modern fighting.

If distress came, help would be given ; but meanwhile the energies of all should be centred on mobilizing all resources for the assistance of the Government in maintaining the struggle and in developing the country's means of offence and defence. In pre-war days it had been suggested that Mr. Lloyd George was lavish in expending the nation's wealth on social schemes. As we see from his speech on Munitions (*post*, pp. 100, 101), our then Chancellor took the large view. He believed and believes that economy consists, not in restriction of expenditure, but in taking care that full value is given for every penny that is spent.

A few days later came Mr. Asquith's Edinburgh speech, which devoted itself chiefly to the causes of the war and Germany's mistakes and crimes, and to the historical precedents which justified the action his Cabinet had taken. The same points were eloquently dealt with in his speech at the Queen's Hall on the twentieth of the same month by M<sup>r</sup>. Lloyd George. The latter dealt scathingly with the German Chancellor's 'scrap of paper'. He appealed, too, in his most eloquent terms for the vindication of the rights of little nations, showing how much the world owed to their genius and their struggles. Some criticism has been made of Mr. Asquith's declaration at Newcastle somewhat later, that the country was well provided with munitions of war. It soon appeared that this was by no means the case, but it may well be that Mr. Asquith said what he did advisedly, for it must be remembered that it was only

## FOREWORD

gradually that the realization of Germany's strength in machine guns and artillery of the heaviest natures was reached. The reduction of the reputedly impregnable forts of Antwerp caused the pendulum to swing the other way, till, when the *Queen Elizabeth* with her 15-inch guns went to the Dardanelles, the then First Lord of the Admiralty believed that the extra weight of her projectiles, as beyond those hitherto carried by our most heavily armed battleships, would render easy the task which highly competent authorities had declared to be impossible.

By the middle of 1915 the fact that an overwhelming supply of munitions was essential to our success had been thoroughly realized, and the Ministry of Munitions was inaugurated, Mr. Lloyd George, who took over its formation and management, told the House of Commons on the 20th December 1915 something of the problem which he had so successfully tackled, and of the work which he had done. This was the speech in which the present Prime Minister made his notable outburst against what he characterized as the policy of 'Too Late'. The speech is a remarkable record of improvisation, co-ordination, and expansion. The result of Mr. Lloyd George's then labours, and of the Ministry's subsequent endeavours, is seen in the protests of the Germans after the battle of Arras that the Allies have surpassed them in munitions and mechanical supplies. As was hinted at Guildhall on the 27th April 1917, when the Prime Minister received the freedom of the City of London, those who considered Mr. Lloyd George's original scheme for large productions of munitions ridiculous and excessive are now the first to acknowledge the wisdom of his estimates and the fitness of his provision for carrying those estimates into effect.

Another step in the realization of our task was made when on the 9th July 1915, at Guildhall, Lord Kitchener, to whose untiring efforts the existence of the new army is due, whilst recognizing the extraordinary and unprecedented results of the appeals which had been made for voluntary enlistment,

## FOREWORD

xxv

announced that we must go a step further and bring in those individuals who from shyness or from other causes had not yet yielded to their own patriotic impulses. He announced that the National Registration Act was to be passed to ascertain the numbers of persons eligible for national service, whether for army, navy, or munitions.

As we all know now, the National Registration Act, though a useful and necessary measure, was not in itself sufficient for our needs, and it had in due course to be followed by a measure of compulsory service.

Much interest attaches to the speech of the Hon. James M. Beck at the Pilgrims' Club on the 5th July 1916. He brought a message of goodwill from an important section of his countrymen and told us how they regarded Germany's crimes and England's entry into the war. He explained, too, the reasons which at that time prevented the United States from taking her stand at our side. Washington had explained that Europe had a set of primary interests which to the United States have no, or very remote, relations, and accordingly he advised his countrymen not by artificial ties to implicate themselves in the ordinary vicissitudes of European politics, or the ordinary combinations or collisions of her friendships and enmities. Following upon this there was the nation's adherence to the Monroe doctrine, which again produced a policy of isolation, being founded upon a disclaimer of any interest by the United States in the internal affairs of Europe. The world has become much smaller since the days of Washington, and Europe is much closer to the United States than it was a hundred and forty years ago, and accordingly the moral of Washington's advice does not forbid interference *under any circumstances*.

It is evident that Mr. Beck appreciated the policy of his President and of the United States Cabinet, for it was only after the announcement of Germany's new submarine policy at the end of January 1917 that the United States felt that Teutonic aggression had stretched outside Europe and had plainly attacked the United States herself. Then a new reading

was given to Washington's advice and the Monroe doctrine went overboard.

President Wilson's message to Congress of the 26th February 1917 is interesting for several reasons. Its primary object was to obtain from the dying Congress such authority as would enable him to maintain the dignity of the country in the interregnum which was upon them—a period which had to elapse between the expiry of one parliament and the assembling of its successor. The United States were fortunate in that, in this momentous crisis of their history, continuity of policy had been maintained by the re-election of Mr. Wilson. As it turned out, no serious results followed from the fact that an instant declaration of war cannot under the United States Constitution be attained. In spite of the contraction of international interests, America is still far enough away from the volcanic centres of disturbance in the Old World for a period to be given her to set in motion the machinery with which she has been provided by her Constitution for that purpose, and with it to complete the cycle of operation.

Being then on the point of being deprived for a season of the support of the two Houses of Congress, the President sought to take a vote of confidence from them, and he disclosed the steps which he proposed with their sanction to take. The United States by this time had had experience of nearly four weeks of German piracy. For warfare which is directed against all commerce, both belligerent and neutral, is sheer piracy in law, whether it be maintained in pursuance of an express declaration by a Sovereign Power, as in this case, or without notice by a relatively humble individual like the late Captain Kidd and the other forerunners of Admiral von Tirpitz in the eighteenth century. So the President disclosed and obtained support for his policy of arming American merchant ships to enable them to resist attack, whilst still expressing the hope that even if armed neutrality were necessary, war might still be avoided. But the experience of two months more showed that this hope was not to be realized.

Three days before this speech of the President another result of the announcement of unrestricted submarine warfare had been made by Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons. No doubt from the earliest stages of the war as much damage as possible had been done by submarines to British and Allied shipping, the reason for the increase in the amount of tonnage sent down being due not to increased violence of the attack, but to the larger numbers of submarines which the German Admiralty was able to send to sea. Nevertheless, the announcement of unrestricted war against shipping was bound to have its effect on the British position, for the world was faced with a loss of neutral tonnage on the same scale as that which was being, and would be, suffered by that of the Entente Powers. Thus the carrying power of the world was likely—in the absence of effective measures to cope with the menace—to be diminished in an increasing ratio. Realizing this, the British Prime Minister announced to the House of Commons, on the 23rd February 1917, that the success of the Allies depended, in his judgement, on the solution of the tonnage difficulties with which they were confronted. He pointed out how before the war the tonnage of the world's shipping was only just adequate to its needs; how since the war the large shipbuilding programme which Britain then had in hand had been largely suspended for unavoidable reasons; how large demands had been made upon the available shipping of the Empire and of the Allies for naval and military purposes, and how accordingly a very limited amount had been left to carry on the general trade, including the provisioning of Great Britain, the citadel of the Empire. He held that the problem called for the gravest measures. Complete immunity of the sea is not to be attained, and even if the life of the submarine were rendered impossible, it would still not be within the power of any naval force to guarantee that ships would not be sunk. Accordingly it was necessary to take measures to cope with the situation and its possible further developments. Three sets of remedies were suggested:

first, the measures to be adopted by the navy for the protection of shipping; secondly, the building of merchant ships either in this country or abroad; and thirdly, the limiting of our needs for oversea transport, so that the tonnage available for commercial purposes might be wholly devoted to the import of necessities into this country.

The main point, then, of the speech consisted of suggestions for the restriction of imports. Then came the question of our food supply, and a large part of the speech was devoted to showing how the import of corn could be obviated by developing our home resources. Such suggestions necessarily involved the encouragement<sup>1</sup> of the farmer to break up his land, the supply of labour to him by giving an adequate wage to the labourer, and the prevention of the exploitation of either of these classes of the community by the landlord or others.

Then there were suggestions for restricting the supply of imported paper, and of various luxuries, including alcoholic liquors.

The chief interest of the speech of the Imperial Chancellor—Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg—in the Reichstag, on the 27th February 1917, lies in his reference to what Sir Percy Scott said shortly before the outbreak of the war, in regard to the possible effect of the introduction of the submarine as a weapon. To make quite sure of the ground, whilst the speech is translated from the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the German original is set out in a footnote<sup>1</sup> to enable the accuracy of the translation to be checked. The facts are these :

<sup>1</sup> "Vor dem Kriege, als die Gefahr vor einem deutschen U-Boot-Krieg noch nicht drohte, war es anders. Ich kann mich auf die Ausserung einer englischen Marineautorität, von Sir Percy Scott, aus der Zeit kurz vor Ausbruch des Krieges berufen. Gegen die Behauptung, dass die Zukunft im Seekrieg den U-Booten gehöre, war eingewandt worden, das U-Boot könne nach seiner technischen Natur nicht gefangen nehmen, sondern nur vernichten, und das verstosse gegen die Menschlichkeit. In seiner Erwiderung in der "Times" schreibt nun Sir Percy Scott : "Man denke sich folgenden Fall. Ein Inselland, das in seiner Nahrungsmittelversorgung von

Sir Percy Scott in June 1914 wrote to *The Times* the famous letter in which he stated his belief that the submarine had rendered our superiority in ships of the *Dreadnought* type no avail to us, since when war came, capital ships would have to shelter in harbour. This letter called forth a vast amount of discussion and criticism. Sir Percy Scott lay low till about a month had elapsed, when he sent another long statement to *The Times*. In this he dealt with the criticism which had been levelled at his declaration, and he made use of the following expressions :

' All war is, of course, barbarous, but in war the purpose of the enemy is to crush his foe ; to arrive at this he will attack where his foe is most vulnerable. Our most vulnerable point is our food and oil supply. The submarine has introduced a new method of attacking these supplies. Will feelings of humanity restrain our foes from using it ? '

It will be observed that the Imperial Chancellor quotes Sir Percy Scott as having foretold the policy of submarine warfare as adopted by Germany in February 1917. What Sir Percy Scott did say was :

' I will quote the following extract written by a foreign naval officer : " If we went to war with an insular country, &c." '

That is to say, Sir Percy Scott merely set out the views enunciated by a foreigner (possibly by an officer of the Imperial German Navy itself), and used them to warn his fellow countrymen of the sort of thing they would have to face in

der Seefahrt abhängt, gerät in einen Krieg. Der Gegner betrachtet es als seine Aufgabe, ihm die Zufuhr abzuschneiden. Infolgedessen errichtet er eine Sperre von Minen und Unterseebooten um die Insel, teilt allen Neutralen mit, dass eine solche Sperre errichtet sei und dass, wenn eines ihrer Schiffe sich der Insel nähert, es dies auf eigene Gefahr tue, und die Vernichtung durch Minen oder U-Boote riskiere.' Also genau unser Fall! Und wie urteilt nun Sir Percy Scott hierüber? Hören Sie : ' Ein solche Ankündigung wäre vollständig in Ordnung und, wenn britische oder neutrale Schiffe sie missachteten und die Sperre zu brechen suchten, so könnte nicht angenommen werden, dass sie friedlichen Zwecken dienen, und wenn sie versenkt würden, könnte das nicht als Rückfall in Wildheit und Seeräuberei bezeichnet werden.' From the *Berliner Tageblatt* (Abend-Ausgabe), February 27, 1917.

## FOREWORD

the event of such a war as has, in fact, befallen. And indeed, even if the gallant admiral had enunciated these views himself, it may be humbly suggested that, though a distinguished seaman, he is not an international lawyer, and can hardly be accepted as an authority on a matter of this nature. Indeed, Sir Percy is not a safe guide when he ventures out of purely naval waters. Read the final words of his letter of the 16th July 1914, from which I am now quoting. He wrote :

' It will not need more than one or two ships sent to the bottom to hold up the food supply of this country.'

By the light of the hundreds of brave deeds, passive as well as active, which stand to the credit of the men of the mercantile marine in the present war, of the steadiness with which they keep the mercantile flag of England flying in every sea in spite of German frightfulness, the absurdity of Sir Percy Scott's view is apparent.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that sending down passenger vessels in rough weather and far from land did not come within the disclosures of the 'foreign naval officer'. Sir Percy Scott cannot, even inferentially, be assumed to have assented to more than the destruction of property by submarine blockaders. True, he refers to the action of Federal cruisers in the American Civil War. The craft at which these cruisers fired were, however, *ex hypothesi*, vessels which had been warned to stop and submit to visit and search. This they had declined to do, and had tried to bolt. By all the rules of international law, a vessel which tries to get away after warning is liable to be fired at and, in the event, sunk. The modern German plan is to omit visit and search and to sink without warning. The case said to have been approved by Sir Percy Scott and quoted by the Chancellor did not cover this, and no doubt the Chancellor knows it.

The remainder of the speech deals with points which may have satisfied the members of the Reichstag and their constituents, but suggestions of the existence of an ancient

friendship for America, and of Germany's desire for the Freedom of the Seas, will hardly appeal to well-informed neutrals.

The speeches of Sir Robert Borden and Lieutenant-General Smuts, at the luncheon at the House of Commons on the 2nd April, are of immense interest as showing the feelings of the Great Dominions of the British Empire oversea, their loyalty to that Empire and to the cause of freedom, and of the measure of the effort which they have made and are making to maintain that freedom.

What General Smuts said is especially noteworthy in view of his reference to the Boer War. Here we have a man who, less than a score of years ago, was fighting against Britain, now taking his place in the forefront of her battle for justice and freedom, because he has recognized that, after all, the British flag stands for liberty and for the protection of little nations.

The address to Congress on the 3rd April by Mr. Wilson sets out with great clearness the reasons which at last decided America to come into the World War and to join the Entente Powers. He draws a scathing indictment of the breaches by the German Government of the laws alike of humanity and of International Right. He gives an answer to Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's profession of friendship for the United States by his reference to the intrigues of the German Ambassador and his satellites with Mexico, and to their treacherous action in regard to American domestic affairs whilst enjoying the privileges and exemptions of diplomatists. In conclusion, the President gave some indication of the policy which his Government proposes to follow in applying the great resources of their country to the best advantage for the destruction of autocracy and the attainment of a durable peace.

Finally, we have the speech of Lord Robert Cecil in the debate in the House of Commons on the 16th May 1917. Lord Robert not only made a magnificent debating speech, but he also remorselessly exposed the absurdities of those, in some cases well-meaning, people who, owing possibly to

## FOREWORD

their inability to think clearly, are led away by maxims and catchwords. He took as a text for part of his speech the suggestion that the Entente Powers should be content without 'Annexation or Indemnity'. By examination of the individual cases of the several countries foully wronged by Germany during the last three years, he showed that nobody in his senses could claim that there should be no indemnity for the losses which have been sustained by each of the various Allies. With reference to equally cogent instances of German treatment of subject nations, cases which have now become historical, he insisted that it would be a cruel wrong to hand back to German terrorism and oppression the countries which are now freed, or in process of being freed, from the yoke of the Hun. Similarly, in regard to the Armenian question, he claimed that it would be an international crime to hand back the remains of the Armenian nation to their Turkish oppressors. In fine, Lord Robert Cecil's speech amplifies and adapts to present-day conditions the line of policy which was indicated by Sir Edward Grey and the other leaders of the British people in the early days of the present World War.

## SIR EDWARD GREY

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AUGUST 3, 1914

### BRITAIN ENTERS THE ARENA—SHE PROMISES NAVAL ASSISTANCE TO FRANCE

SIR EDWARD GREY said : Last week I stated that we were working for peace not only for this country, but to preserve the peace of Europe. To-day events move so rapidly that it is exceedingly difficult to state with technical accuracy the actual state of affairs, but it is clear that the peace of Europe cannot be preserved. Russia and Germany, at any rate, have declared war upon each other.

#### *British Obligations*

Before I proceed to state the position of His Majesty's Government I would like to clear the ground so that the House may know exactly under what obligations the Government is or the House can be said to be in coming to a decision upon the matter. First of all let me say very shortly that we have consistently worked with a single mind and with all the earnestness in our power to preserve the peace. The House may be satisfied on that point. We have always done it. During these last years, as far as his Majesty's Government are concerned, we would have no difficulty in proving that we have done so. Throughout the Balkan crisis by general admission we worked for peace. The co-operation of the Great Powers was successful in working for peace in that crisis. It is true that some Powers had great difficulty in adjusting their points of view. It took much time and labour and discussion before they could settle their differences, but peace was secured because peace was their main object and they were willing to give time and trouble to the consideration of difficulties rather than to accentuate the differences that arose.

*Great Powers at War*

In the present crisis it has not been possible to secure the peace of Europe, because there has been little time and there has been a disposition, at any rate in some quarters, on which I will not dwell, to force things rapidly to an issue—at any rate to the great risk of peace—and as we now know the result of that is that the policy of peace, as far as the Great Powers generally are concerned, is in danger. I do not want to dwell on that and to comment upon it, to say where blame seems to us to lie, which Powers were most in favour of peace, which were most disposed to risk or to endanger peace, because I would like the House to approach the crisis in which we are from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations, free from all passion as to why peace has not been preserved.

We shall publish papers as soon as we can regarding what took place last week when we were working for peace, and when these papers are published I have no doubt that to every human being they will make it clear how strenuous and genuine and whole-hearted our efforts for peace were, and they will enable people to form their own judgement as to what forces were at work which operated against peace.

*Britain has no Secret Obligations*

I come first now to the question of British obligations. I have assured the House, and the Prime Minister has assured the House more than once, that if any crisis such as this arose we should come before the House of Commons and be able to say to the House that it was free to decide what the British attitude should be; that we would have no secret engagement which we should spring upon the House and tell the House that because we had entered upon that engagement there was an obligation of honour on the country. I will deal with that point to clear the ground first.

There have been in Europe two diplomatic groups—the Triple Alliance, and what came to be called the Triple Entente—for some years past. The Triple Entente was not an Alliance: it was a diplomatic group. The House will remember that in 1908 there was a crisis—also a Balkan crisis—originating in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian Minister,

M. Isvolsky, happened to come to London —because his visit had been planned before the crisis broke out. I told him definitely then that this being a Balkan affair I did not consider that public opinion in this country would justify us in promising to give anything more than diplomatic support. More was never asked from us, more was never given, and more was never promised.

*'Up till yesterday'*

In this present crisis up till yesterday we have also given no promise of anything more than diplomatic support. Up till yesterday no promise of more than diplomatic support. Now I must make this question of obligation clear to the House. I must go back to the first Moroccan crisis of 1906. That was the time of the Algeciras Conference. It came at a very difficult time for his Majesty's Government, when a General Election was in progress and Ministers were scattered all over the country, and I—spending three days a week in my constituency and three days at the Foreign Office—was asked the question whether if that crisis developed into war between France and Germany we would give armed support. I said then that I could promise nothing to any foreign Power unless it was subsequently to receive the whole-hearted support of public opinion here if the occasion arose. I said, in my opinion, if war were forced upon France, then on the question of Morocco—a question which had just been the subject of agreement between this country and France; an agreement exceedingly popular on both sides—that if out of that agreement war were forced upon France at that time, in my view public opinion in this country would have rallied to the material support of France.

*Expert Conversations*

I gave no promise; but I expressed that opinion during the crisis as far as I remember almost in the same words to the French Ambassador and the German Ambassador at the time. I made no promise and I used no threats. But I expressed that opinion. That position was accepted by the French Government, but they said to me at the time, and I think very reasonably, 'If you think it possible that public opinion in

Great Britain might, should a sudden crisis arise, justify you in giving to France the armed support which you cannot promise in advance, you will not be able to give that support, even if you wish it, unless some conversations have taken place between naval and military experts.' There was force in that. I agreed to it and authorized those conversations to take place, but on the distinct understanding that nothing which passed between military or naval experts should bind either Government or restrict in any way their freedom to make a decision as to whether or not they would give that support when the time arose.

As I have told the House, upon that occasion a General Election was in prospect. I had to take the responsibility of doing that without the Cabinet. It could not be summoned. An answer had to be given. I consulted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister; I consulted, I remember, Lord Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War; and the present Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. That was the most I could do. They authorized that, but on the distinct understanding that it left the hands of the Government free whenever the crisis arose. The fact that conversations between military and naval experts took place was later on—I think much later, because that crisis passed, and the thing ceased to be of importance—but later on brought to the knowledge of the Cabinet.

The Agadir crisis came—another Morocco crisis—and throughout that I took precisely the same line that had been taken in 1906. But subsequently, in 1912, after discussion and consideration in the Cabinet, it was decided that we ought to have a definite understanding in writing, which was to be only in the form of an unofficial letter, that these conversations were not binding upon the freedom of either Government.

#### *Correspondence with the French Ambassador*

And on November 22, 1912, I wrote to the French Ambassador the letter which I will now read to the House, and I received from him a letter in similar terms in reply. The letter which I have to read is this, and it will be known to the public now as the record that whatever took place between military and naval

experts, they were not binding engagements upon the Governments:

'My dear Ambassador.—From time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that that consultation between experts is not, and ought not to be, regarded as an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British Fleets respectively at the present moment is not based on an engagement to co-operate in war. You have, however, pointed out that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend on the armed assistance of the other. I agree that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common.'

That is the starting-point for the Government with regard to the present crisis. I think it makes it clear that what the Prime Minister and I said to the House of Commons was perfectly justified, and that as regards our freedom to decide in a crisis what our line should be, whether we should intervene or whether we should abstain, the Government remained perfectly free and *a fortiori* the House of Commons remains perfectly free. That I say to clear the ground from the point of view of obligation. I think it was due, to prove our good faith to the House of Commons, that I should give that full information to the House now, and say what I think is obvious from the letter I have just read, that we do not construe anything which has previously taken place in our diplomatic relations with other Powers in this matter as restricting the freedom of the Government to decide what attitude they shall take now, or restrict

the freedom of the House of Commons to decide what their attitude should be. I will go further and I will say this. The situation in the present crisis is not precisely the same as it was in the Morocco question. In the Morocco question it was primarily a dispute which concerned France. It was a dispute, as it seemed to us, affecting France out of an agreement subsisting between us and France and published to the whole world in which we engaged to give France diplomatic support. No doubt we were pledged to give nothing but diplomatic support, but we were pledged by a definite agreement to stand with France diplomatically in that question.

#### *The Present Crisis*

The present crisis has originated differently. It has not originated with regard to Morocco; it has not originated regarding anything with which we have a special agreement with France. It has not originated with regard to anything which primarily concerns France. It has originated in a dispute between Austria and Serbia. I can say this with the most absolute confidence, no Government and no country has less desire to be involved in war over a dispute between Austria and Serbia than the Government and the country of France. They are involved in it because of their obligations of honour under a definite alliance with Russia. It is only fair to say to the House that that obligation of honour cannot apply in the same way to us. We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance; we do not even know the terms of that Alliance. So far I have, I think, faithfully and completely cleared the ground with regard to the question of obligation.

#### *British Friendship with France*

I now come to what we think the situation requires of us. For many years we have had a long-standing friendship with France. (An hon. member—'And with Germany.') I remember well the feeling in the House—my own feeling, for I spoke on the subject, I think, when the late Government made their agreement with France—the warm and cordial feeling resulting from the fact that these two nations, who had had perpetual differences in the past, had cleared those differences away. I remember saying, I think,

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that it seemed to me that some benign influence had been at work to produce the cordial atmosphere which had made that possible. But how far that friendship entails obligation—and it has been a friendship between the nations and ratified by the nations—let every man look into his own heart and his own feelings and construe the extent of the obligation, for himself. I construe it myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon any one else more than their feelings dictate as to what they should feel about the obligation. The House individually and collectively may judge for itself. I speak my personal view and I have given the House my own feeling in the matter.

The French Fleet is now in the Mediterranean, and the northern and western coasts of France are absolutely undefended. The French Fleet being concentrated in the Mediterranean, the situation is very different from what it used to be, because the friendship which has grown up between the two countries has given them a sense of security that there was nothing to be feared from us. The French coasts are absolutely undefended. The French Fleet is in the Mediterranean, and has been for some years concentrated there, because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries.

My own feeling is this, that if a foreign Fleet, engaged in a war which France had not sought and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside and see this going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately doing nothing. I believe that would be the feeling of this country. There are times when one feels that if these circumstances actually did arise it would be a feeling that would spread with irresistible force throughout the land.

#### *Our Interests in the Mediterranean*

But I want to look at the thing also without sentiment, and from the point of view of British interests, and it is on that that I am going to base and justify what I am presently going to say to the House. If we say nothing at this moment, what is France to do with her Fleet in the Mediterranean? If she

leaves it there, with no statement from us as to what we will do, she leaves her northern and western coasts absolutely undefended at the mercy of a German fleet coming down the Channel, to do as it pleases in a war which is a war of life and death between them. If we say nothing, it may be that the French Fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean. We are in the presence of a European conflagration. Can anybody set limits to the consequences which may arise out of it ?

Let us assume that to-day we stand aside in an attitude of neutrality, saying, 'No, we cannot undertake and engage to help either party in the conflict.' Let us suppose the French Fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean ; let us assume that the consequences—which are already tremendous in what has already happened in Europe even in countries which are at peace—in fact, equally whether countries are at peace or at war ; let us assume that out of that come consequences unforeseen, which make it necessary at a sudden moment, that in defence of vital British interests we should go to war ; and let us assume, which is quite possible, that Italy, who is now neutral—because, as I understand, she considers this war is an aggressive war, and the Triple Alliance being a defensive alliance her obligations did not arise—let us assume that consequences which are not yet foreseen—and which perfectly legitimately, consulting her own interests—made Italy depart from her attitude of neutrality at a time when we are forced in defence of vital British interests ourselves to fight, what then will be the position in the Mediterranean ? It might be that at some critical moment those consequences would be forced upon us because our trade routes in the Mediterranean might be vital to this country. Nobody can say that, in the course of the next few weeks, there is any particular trade route the keeping open of which may not be vital to this country. What will our position be then ? We have not kept a fleet in the Mediterranean which is equal alone to deal with a combination of other fleets in the Mediterranean. It would be the very moment when we could not detach more ships for the Mediterranean, and we might have exposed this country from our negative attitude at the present moment to the most appalling risk.

*France must know what we intend*

I say that from the point of view of British interests. We felt strongly that France was entitled to know and to know at once whether or not in the event of attack upon her unprotected northern and western coasts she could depend upon British support. In that emergency, and in these compelling circumstances, yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement :

'I am authorized to give an assurance that, if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German Fleet takes place.'

I read that to the House, not as a declaration of war on our part, not as entailing immediate aggressive action on our part, but as binding us to take aggressive action should that contingency arise. Things moved very hurriedly from hour to hour. Fresh news comes in, and I cannot give this in any very formal way ; but I understand that the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its Fleet would not attack the northern coast of France. I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but it is far too narrow an engagement for us. And, Sir, there is the more serious consideration, becoming more serious every hour—there is the question of the neutrality of Belgium.

*Our Position towards Belgium*

I shall have to put before the House at some length what is our position in regard to Belgium. The governing factor is the Treaty of 1839, but this is a treaty with a history—a history accumulated since. In 1870, when there was war between France and Germany, the question of the neutrality of Belgium arose and various things were said. Amongst other things Prince Bismarck gave an assurance to Belgium that, confirming

his verbal assurance, he gave in writing a declaration which he said was superfluous in reference to the Treaty in existence—that the German Confederation and its allies would respect the neutrality of Belgium, it being always understood that that neutrality would be respected by the other belligerent Powers. That is valuable as a recognition in 1870 on the part of Germany of the sacredness of these treaty rights.

What was our own attitude? The people who laid down the attitude of the British Government were Lord Granville in the House of Lords, and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. Lord Granville on the 8th of August, 1870, used these words. He said :

' We might have explained to the country and to foreign nations that we did not think this country was bound, either morally or internationally, or that its interests were concerned in the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium. Though this course might have had some conveniences, though it might have been easy to adhere to it, though it might have saved us from some immediate danger, it is a course which Her Majesty's Government thought it impossible to adopt in the name of the country, with any due regard to the country's honour or to the country's interests.'

Mr. Gladstone spoke as follows, two days later :

' There is, I admit, the obligation of the Treaty. It is not necessary, nor would time permit me, to enter into the complicated question of the nature of the obligations of that Treaty. But I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises. The great authorities upon foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, never to my knowledge took that rigid, and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of the guarantee. The circumstance that there is already an existing guarantee in force is, of necessity, an important fact, and a weighty element in the case to which

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we are bound to give full and ample consideration. There is also this further consideration, the force of which we must all feel most deeply, and that is, the common interests against the unmeasured aggrandizement of any Power whatever.'

The Treaty is an old Treaty -1839—and that was the view taken of it in 1870. It is one of those treaties which are founded, not only on consideration for Belgium which benefits under the Treaty, but in the interests of those who guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The honour and interests are at least as strong to-day as they were in 1870, and we cannot take a more narrow view or a less serious view of our obligations, and of the importance of those obligations, than was taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870.

*The Intentions of France and Germany towards Belgium*

I will read to the House what took place last week on this subject. When mobilization was beginning I knew that this question must be a most important element in our policy—a most important subject for the House of Commons. I telegraphed at the same time in similar terms to both Paris and Berlin to say that it was essential for us to know whether the French and German Governments, respectively, were prepared to undertake an engagement to respect the neutrality of Belgium. I got from the French Government this reply :

'The French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure the defence of her security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. The President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to-day.'

From the German Government the reply was :

'The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not possibly give an answer before consulting the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor.'

Sir Edward Goschen, to whom I had said it was important to

have an answer soon, said he hoped the answer would not be too long delayed. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs then gave Sir Edward Goschen to understand that he rather doubted whether they could answer at all, as any reply they might give could not fail, in the event of war, to have the undesirable effect of disclosing to a certain extent part of their plan of campaign. I telegraphed, at the same time, to Brussels to the Belgian Government, and I got the following reply from Sir Francis Villiers :

'The Minister for Foreign Affairs thanks me for the communication, and replies that Belgium will, to the utmost of her power, maintain neutrality, and expects and desires other Powers to observe and uphold it. He begged me to add that the relations between Belgium and the neighbouring Powers were excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions, but that the Belgian Government believed, in the case of violation, they were in a position to defend the neutrality of their country.'

It now appears from the news I have received to-day, which has come quite recently—and I am not yet quite sure how far it has reached me in an accurate form—that an ultimatum has been given to Belgium by Germany, the object of which was to offer Belgium friendly relations with Germany on condition that she would facilitate the passage of German troops through Belgium. Well, Sir, until one has these things absolutely definitely, up to the last moment, I do not wish to say all that one would say if one was in a position to give the House full, complete, and absolute information upon the point. We were sounded, in the course of last week, as to whether, if a guarantee was given that after the war Belgian integrity would be preserved, that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality.

#### *The King of the Belgians to King George*

Shortly before I reached the House I was informed that the following telegram has been received from the King of the Belgians by our King George :

'Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessor, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship she has just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the Diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.'

Diplomatic intervention took place last week on our part. What can diplomatic intervention do now? We have great and vital interests in the independence and integrity is the least part of Belgium. If Belgium is compelled to submit to allow her neutrality to be violated, of course the situation is clear. Even if, by agreement, she admitted the violation of her neutrality, it is clear she could only do so under duress. The smaller States in that region of Europe ask but one thing. Their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity, but that their independence should be interfered with. If in this war which is before Europe the neutrality of one of those countries is violated, if the troops of one of the combatants violate its neutrality and no action be taken to resent it, at the end of the war whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone.

I have one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought about the independence of Belgium. It will be found in Hansard, volume 203, page 1787. I have not had time to read the whole speech and verify the context, but the thing seems to me so clear that no context could make any difference to the meaning of it. He said :

'We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether, under the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participants in the sin.'

No, Sir, if it be the case that there has been anything in the nature of an ultimatum to Belgium asking her to compromise or violate her neutrality, whatever may have been offered to

her in return, her independence is gone if that holds. If her independence goes the independence of Holland will follow.

*Britain's Stake*

I ask the House, from the point of view of British interests to consider what may be at stake. If France is beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a Great Power, becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself—consequences which I do not anticipate, because I am sure that France has the power to defend herself with all the energy and ability and patriotism which she has shown so often—still if that were to happen, and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland and then Denmark, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that just opposite to us there would be a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandizement of any Power?

*The Coward's Alternative*

It may be said, I suppose, that we might stand aside, husband our strength, and that, whatever happened in the course of this war, at the end of it intervene with effect to put things right and to adjust them to our own point of view. If, in a crisis like this, we ran away from those obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian Treaty, I doubt whether whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost. And, do not believe, whether a Great Power stands outside this war or not, it is going to be in a position at the end of this war, to exert its superior strength. For us, with a powerful Fleet which we believe able to protect our commerce, to protect our shores, and to protect our interests, if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer even if we stand aside.

We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war, whether we are in it or whether we stand aside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war, all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle—they cannot carry on

the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not. I do not believe at the end of this war, even if we stood aside and remained aside, that we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war, to prevent the whole of the west of Europe opposite to us—if that had been the result of the war—falling under the domination of a single Power, and I am quite sure that our moral position would be such as to have lost us all respect.

#### *Britain's Obligation to Belgium*

I can only say that I have put the question of Belgium somewhat hypothetically, because I am not yet sure of all the facts, but if the facts turn out to be as they have reached us at present, it is quite clear that there is an obligation on this country to do its utmost to prevent the consequences to which those facts will lead if they are undisputed.

I have read to the House the only engagements that we have yet taken definitely with regard to the use of force. I think it is due to the House to say that we have taken no engagement yet with regard to sending an Expeditionary armed force out of the country. Mobilization of the Fleet has taken place; mobilization of the Army is taking place; but we have, as yet, taken no engagement, because I do feel that in the case of a European conflagration such as this, unprecedented, with our enormous responsibilities in India and other parts of the Empire, or countries in British occupation, with all the unknown factors, we must take very carefully into consideration the use which we make of sending an Expeditionary Force out of the country until we know how we stand. One thing I would say.

#### *No danger from Ireland*

The one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland. The general feeling throughout Ireland—and I would like this to be clearly understood abroad—does not make the Irish question a consideration that we feel we have to take into account. I have told the House how far we have at present gone in commitments, and the conditions which

influence our policy, and I have put and dealt at length to the House upon how vital is the condition of the neutrality of Belgium.

What other policy is there before the House? There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that. We have made a commitment to France, which I have read to the House, which prevents us from doing that. We have got the consideration of Belgium also which prevents us from any unconditional neutrality, and without those conditions absolutely satisfied and satisfactory, we are bound not to shrink from proceeding to the use of all the forces in our power. If we did take that line by saying 'We will have nothing whatever to do with this matter under no conditions'—the Belgian Treaty obligations, the possible position in the Mediterranean, with damage to British interests, and what may happen to France from our failure to support France—if we were to say that all those things mattered nothing, were as nothing, and to say we would stand aside, we should, I believe, sacrifice our respect and good name and reputation before the world, and should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.

#### *The Issue before the Country*

My object has been to explain the view of the Government, and to place before the House the issue and the choice. I do not for a moment conceal, after what I have said and after the information, incomplete as it is, that I have given to the House with regard to Belgium, that we must be prepared, and we are prepared for the consequence of having to use all the strength we have at any moment—we know not how soon—to defend ourselves and to take our part. We know, if the facts all be as I have stated them, though I have announced no intending aggressive action on our part, no final decision to resort to force at a moment's notice, until we know the whole of the case, that the use of it may be forced upon us. As far as the forces of the Crown are concerned, we are ready. I believe the Prime Minister and my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Admiralty have no doubt whatever, that the readiness and the

efficiency of those forces were never at a higher mark than they are to-day, and never was there a time when confidence was more justified in the power of the Navy to protect our commerce and to protect our shores. The thought is with us always of the suffering and misery entailed, from which no country in Europe will escape and from which no abstention or neutrality will save us. The amount of harm that can be done by an enemy's ship to our trade is infinitesimal compared with the amount of harm that must be done by the economic condition that is caused on the Continent.

The most awful responsibility is resting upon the Government in deciding what to advise the House of Commons to do. We have disclosed our mind to the House. We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have, and made clear to the House, I trust, that we are prepared to face that situation, and that should it develop as it seems probable to develop, we will face it.

We worked for peace up to the last moment, and beyond the last moment. How hard, how persistently, and how earnestly we strove for peace last week, the House will see from the papers that will be before it. But that is over as far as the peace of Europe is concerned. We are now face to face with a situation and all the consequences which it may yet have to unfold. We believe we shall have the support of the House at large in proceeding to whatever the consequences may be and whatever measures may be forced upon us by the development of facts or action taken by others. I believe the country, so quickly has the situation been forced upon it, has not had time to realize the issue. It, perhaps, is still thinking of the quarrel between Austria and Serbia and not the complications of this matter which have grown out of the quarrel between Austria and Serbia. Russia and Germany we know are at war. We do not yet know officially that Austria, the ally whom Germany is to support, is yet at war with Russia. We know that a good deal has been happening on the French frontier. We do not know that the German Ambassador has left Paris.

The situation has developed so rapidly that, technically, as regards the condition of the war, it is most difficult to describe what has actually happened. I wanted to bring out the underlying things which would affect our own conduct, and our own

policy, and to put them clearly. I have put the vital facts before the House, and if, as seems only too probable, we are forced, and rapidly forced, to take our stand upon those issues, then I believe, when the country realizes what is at stake, what the real issues are, the magnitude of the impending dangers in the West of Europe which I have endeavoured to describe to the House, then I believe we shall be supported throughout, not only by the House of Commons, but by the determination and the resolution, the courage, and the endurance of the whole country.

## MR. ASQUITH AND MR. BONAR LAW

AT THE GUILDHALL, SEPTEMBER 4, 1914

### THE REASONS FOR OUR FIGHTING

#### MR. ASQUITH'S SPEECH

MY Lord Mayor and Citizens of London,—It is three years and a half since I last had the honour of addressing in this hall a gathering of the citizens. We were then met under the presidency, my Lord Mayor, of one of your predecessors—men of all creeds and parties—to celebrate and approve the joint declaration of the two great English-speaking States that for the future any differences between them should be settled, if not by agreement, at least by judicial inquiry and arbitration, and never in any circumstances by war. Those of us who hailed that eirenicon between the United States and ourselves as a landmark on the road of progress were not sanguine enough to think or even to hope that the era of war was drawing to a close—still less were we prepared to anticipate the terrible spectacle which now confronts us—a contest which for the number and importance of the Powers engaged, the scale of their armaments and arms, the width of the theatre of conflict, the outpouring of blood and the loss of life, the incalculable toll of suffering levied upon non-combatants, the material and moral loss accumulating day by day to the higher interests of civilized mankind—a contest which, in every one of these aspects, is without precedent in the annals of the world. We were very confident three years ago in the rightness of our position when we welcomed the new securities for peace. We are equally confident in it to-day, when reluctantly and against our will, but with a clear judgement and a clean conscience, we find ourselves involved with the whole strength of this Empire in a bloody arbitrament between might and right. The issue has passed out of the domain of argument into another field.

*Had Britain stood aside*

But let me ask you, and through you the world outside, what would have been our condition as a nation to-day if we had been base enough, through timidity or through a perverted calculation of self-interest, or through a paralysis of the sense of honour and duty, to be false to our word and faithless to our friends? Our eyes would have been turned at this moment with those of the whole civilized world to Belgium—a small State which has lived for more than seventy years under a special and collective guarantee, to which we, in common with Prussia and Austria, were parties—and we should have seen, at the instance and by the action of two of these guaranteeing Powers, her neutrality violated, her independence strangled, her territory made use of as affording the easiest and most convenient road to a war of unprovoked aggression against France. We, the British people, should at this moment have been standing by with folded arms and with such countenance as we could command, while this small and unprotected State, in defence of her vital liberties, made a heroic stand against overweening and overwhelming force. We should have been watching as detached spectators the siege of Liège, the steady and manful resistance of a small army, the occupation of the capital, with its splendid traditions and memories, the gradual forcing back of the patriotic defenders of their native land to the ramparts of Antwerp, countless outrages suffered by, and buccaneering levies exacted from, the unoffending civil population, and finally the greatest crime committed against civilization and culture since the Thirty Years' War—the sack of Louvain. With its buildings, its pictures, its unique library, its unrivalled associations, a shameless holocaust of irreparable treasures lit up by blind barbarian vengeance.

What account should we, the Government and the people of this country, have been able to render to the tribunal of our national conscience and sense of honour if, in defiance of our plighted and solemn obligations we had not done our best to prevent, yes, and to avenge, these intolerable wrongs?

*Better to Fall than to Fail*

For my part, I say that sooner than be a silent witness, which means in effect a willing accomplice of this tragic triumph of force over law and of brutality over freedom, I would see this country of ours blotted out of the page of history.

That is only a phase, a lurid and illuminating phase, in the contest into which we have been called by the mandate of duty and of honour to bear our part. The cynical violation of the neutrality of Belgium was after all but a step, the first step, in a deliberate policy of which, if not the immediate, the ultimate and not far distant aim was to crush the independence and the autonomy of the free States of Europe. First Belgium, then Holland and Switzerland—countries like our own imbued and sustained with the spirit of liberty—we were one after the other to be bent to the yoke ; and these ambitions were fed and fostered by a body of new doctrines and new philosophy preached by professors and learned men. The free and full self-development which to these small States, to ourselves, to our great and growing Dominions over the seas, to our kinsmen across the Atlantic, is the well-spring and life-breath of national existence ; that free self-development is the one capital offence in the code of those who have made force their supreme divinity and upon its altars are prepared to sacrifice both the gathered fruits and potential germs of the unfettered human spirit. I use this language advisedly. This is not merely a material, it is also a spiritual conflict. Upon this issue everything that contains the promise and hope that leads to emancipation and fuller liberty for the millions who make up the masses of mankind will be found sooner or later to depend.

Let me now turn to the actual situation in Europe. How do we stand ? For the last ten years, by what I believe to be happy and well-considered diplomatic arrangements, we have established friendly and increasingly intimate relations with two Powers—France and Russia—with whom in days gone by we have had in various parts of the world occasions for friction, and now and again for possible conflict. These new and better relations, based in the first instance upon less principles of give and take, matured into a settled temper of confidence and

goodwill. They were never in any sense or at any time, as I have frequently said in this hall, directed against other Powers. No man in the history of the world has ever laboured more strenuously or more successfully than my right hon. friend Sir Edward Grey for that which is the supreme interest of the modern world—a general and abiding peace. It is a very superficial criticism which suggests that under his guidance the policy of this country has ignored, still less that it has counteracted and hampered, the Concert of Europe. It is little more than a year ago that, under his presidency, in the stress and strain of the Balkan crisis, the Ambassadors of all the Great Powers met here day after day curtailing the area of possible differences, reconciling warring ambitions and aims, and preserving against almost incalculable odds the general harmony ; and it was in the same spirit and with the same purpose, when, a few weeks ago, Austria delivered her ultimatum to Serbia, that the Foreign Secretary, for it was he, put forward a proposal for a mediating Conference between the four Powers who were not directly concerned—Germany, France, Italy, and ourselves. If that proposal had been accepted, actual controversy would have been settled with honour to everybody, and the whole of this terrible welter would have been avoided.

#### *The Responsibility*

And with whom does the responsibility rest ? For its refusal and for all the illimitable sufferings which now confront the world ? One Power and one Power only, and that Power is Germany. That is the fountain and origin of this world-wide catastrophe. We persevered to the end. No one who has not been confronted as we were with the responsibility which, unless you have been face to face with it, you cannot possibly measure—the responsibility of determining the issues of peace and war—no one who has not been in that position can realize the strength, the energy, the persistence with which we laboured for peace. We persevered by every expedient that diplomacy can suggest, straining to almost the breaking-point our most cherished friendships and obligations, even to the last making effort upon effort and hoping against hope. Then, and only then, when we were at last compelled to realize that the choice lay between honour and dishonour, between treachery

and good faith, and that we had at last reached the dividing line which makes or mars a nation worthy of the name, it was then, and then only, that we declared for war. Is there any one in this hall or in this United Kingdom or in the vast Empire of which we here stand in the capital and centre, who blames or repents our decision? If, as I believe, there is not, we must steel ourselves to the task, and in the spirit which animated our forefathers in their struggle against the domination of Napoleon we must and we shall persevere to the end.

#### *Magnitude of the Task*

It would be a criminal mistake to under-estimate either the magnitude or fighting quality or the staying power of the forces which are arrayed against us; but it would be equally foolish and equally indefensible to belittle our own resources, whether for resistance or attack. Belgium has shown us—by a memorable and glorious example—what can be done by a relatively small State when its citizens are animated and fired by the spirit of patriotism. In France and Russia we have as allies two of the greatest Powers in the world, engaged with us in a common cause, who do not mean to separate themselves from us any more than we mean to separate ourselves from them. We have upon the seas the strongest and most magnificent Fleet which has ever been seen. The Expeditionary Force which left our shores less than a month ago has never been surpassed, as its glorious achievements in the field have already made clear, not only in material equipment, but in the physical and moral quality of its constituent parts.

As regards the Navy, I am assured by my right hon. friend, whom we are glad to see here [Mr. Churchill],<sup>1</sup> that there is happily little more to be done. I do not flatter it when I say that its superiority is equally marked in every department and sphere of its activity. We rely upon it with the most absolute confidence, not only to guard our shores against the possibility of invasion, not only to seal up the gigantic battleships of the enemy in the inglorious seclusion of their own ports, whence from time to time he furtively steals forth to sow the sea with the murderous snares which are more full of menace to neutral

<sup>1</sup> Then First Lord of the Admiralty.

shipping than to the British Fleet—our Navy does all this, and while it is thirsting, I do not doubt, for a trial of strength in a fair and open fight, which is so far prudently denied it, it does a great deal more. It has hunted the German mercantile marine from the high seas. It has kept open our own sources of food supplies and largely curtailed those of the enemy ; and when the few German cruisers which still infest the more distant ocean routes have been disposed of, as they will be very soon, it will have achieved for British and neutral commerce, passing backwards and forwards from and to every part of our Empire, a security as complete as it has ever enjoyed in the days of unbroken peace. Let us honour the memory of the gallant seamen who, in the pursuit of one or other of these varied and responsible duties, have already laid down their lives for their country.

#### *More Men for the Army*

In regard to the Army, there is call for a new, a continuous, and a determined and united effort, for as the war goes on we shall have not merely to replace the wastage caused by casualties, not merely to maintain our military power at its original level; we must, if we are to play a worthy part, enlarge its scale, increase its numbers, and multiply many times its effectiveness as a fighting instrument. The object of the appeal which I have made to you, my Lord Mayor, and the other chief magistrates of our capital cities, is to impress upon the people of the United Kingdom the imperious urgency of this supreme duty. Our self-governing Dominions throughout the Empire, without any solicitation on our part, demonstrated with a spontaneousness and unanimity unparalleled in history their determination to affirm their brotherhood with us and to make our cause their own. Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland, children of the Empire, assert, not as an obligation but as a privilege, their right and their willingness to contribute money and material, and, what is better than all, the strength and sinews, the fortunes and the lives of their best men.

India, with no less alacrity, has claimed her share in the common task. Every class and creed, British and native, princes and people, Hindus and Mohammedans, vie with one

another in a noble and emulous rivalry. Two divisions of our magnificent Army are already on their way. We welcome with appreciation and affection their proffered aid, and in an Empire which knows no distinction of race or caste, where all alike, as subjects of the King-Emperor, are joint and equal custodians of our common interests and fortunes, we here hail with profound and heartfelt gratitude their association, side by side and shoulder to shoulder with our home and Dominion troops, under the flag which is the symbol to all of a unity that the world in arms cannot disperse or dissolve. With these inspiring appeals and examples from our fellow subjects all over the world, what are we doing and what ought we to do here at home? Mobilization was ordered on August 4. Immediately afterwards Lord Kitchener issued his call for 100,000 recruits for the Regular Army. It has been followed by a second call for another 100,000. The response up till to-day gives us between 250,000 and 300,000, and I am glad to say that London has done its share. The total number of Londoners accepted is not less than 42,000.

#### *Territorials Volunteering for Flanders*

I need hardly say that that appeal involves no disparagement or discouragement to the Territorial Force. The number of units in that force who have volunteered for foreign service is most satisfactory and grows every day.

We look to them with confidence to increase their numbers, to perfect their organization and training, and to play efficiently the part which has always been assigned to them, both offensive and defensive, in the military system of the Empire.

#### *The Army's Expansion*

But to go back to the expansion of the Regular Army. We want more men, men of the best fighting quality, and if for a moment the number who offer and are accepted should prove to be in excess of those who can at once be adequately trained and equipped, do not let them doubt that prompt provision will be made for the incorporation of all willing and able men in the fighting forces of the King. We want, first of all, men, and we shall endeavour to secure that men desiring to serve together shall, wherever possible, be allotted to the same

regiment or corps. The raising of battalions by counties and municipalities with this object will be in every way encouraged. But we want not less urgently a larger supply of ex-non-commissioned officers, and the pick of the men with whom in past days they have served, and therefore whom in most cases we shall be asking to give up regular employment and to return to the work of the State which they alone are competent to do. The appeal we make is addressed quite as much to their employers as to the men themselves. The men ought surely to be assured of reinstatement to their positions at the end of the war.

And, finally, there are numbers of commissioned officers now in retirement who have had large experience in handling troops, who have served their country in the past. Let them come forward too, and show their willingness, if need be, to train bodies of men for whom for the moment no regular cadre or unit can be found.

#### *A Long Fight*

Of the actual progress of the war I will say nothing except that in my judgement, in whatever direction we look, there is abundant ground for pride and comfort. I say nothing more, because I think we should bear in mind, all of us, that we are at present watching the fluctuations of fortune only in the early stages of what is going to be a protracted struggle. We must learn to take long views and to cultivate above all other facul-~~ties~~ those of patience, endurance, and steadfastness. Meanwhile, let us go, each of us, to do his or her appropriate part in the great common task. Never had a people, as you have most truly said, my Lord Mayor, more or richer sources of encouragement and inspiration.

#### *The Cause worthy of Britain's Traditions*

Let us realize, first of all, that we are fighting as a united Empire in a cause worthy of the highest traditions of our race. Let us keep in mind the patient and indomitable seamen who never relax for a moment, night or day, their stern vigil on the lonely seas. Let us keep in mind our gallant troops, who to-day, after a fortnight's continuous fighting under conditions which would try the mettle of the

best army that ever took the field, maintain not only an undefeated, but an unbroken, front.

And, finally, let us recall the memories of the great men and the great deeds of the past, commemorated, some of them, as you have reminded us, in the monuments which we see around us on these walls, not forgetting the dying message of the younger Pitt, his last public utterance made at the table of your predecessor, my Lord Mayor, in this very hall—'England has saved herself by her exertions and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.' England in those days gave a noble answer to his appeal, and did not sheathe the sword until, after nearly twenty years of fighting, the freedom of Europe was secured. Let us go and do likewise.

#### MR. BONAR LAW'S SPEECH

##### *A Nation united for War*

It would indeed be impossible for me to add anything to the force of the appeal which has just been addressed by the Prime Minister to our people, but I am glad to be here as representing one of our great political parties in order to show clearly that in this supreme struggle, in everything connected with it until it is brought to a triumphant close, the head of our Government must speak, not as the leader of a party, but as the mouthpiece of the nation. We are a peace-loving people, but never, I believe, in our history has the whole nation been so convinced as it is to-day that the cause for which we are fighting is righteous and just. We strove for peace by all means to the last moment, but when, in spite of our efforts, war came we could not stand aside. The honour and the interests of Great Britain—and, believe me, they go together—alike forbade it. It was inevitable that we must be drawn into this world-struggle, and the only question was whether we should enter it honourably or be dragged into it with dishonour.

##### *Berlin's Responsibility*

This war is a great crime, one of the greatest in history, but it is a crime in which, as a nation, we have no share. Now, as always for nearly a generation, the key of peace or war was in

Berlin. "The head of the German Government had but to whisper the word 'peace' and there would have been no war. He did not speak that word ; he has drawn the sword, and may the accursed system for which he stands perish by the sword. War has come. We are fighting as truly as Belgium or France, where the tide of battle with all its horrors is rolling on, for our life. As Cromwell said to his Ironsides, we can say to-day with equal truth, 'We know what we are fighting for, and we love what we know.' We are fighting for our national existence, for everything which nations have always held most dear. But we are fighting for something more. We are fighting for the moral forces of humanity. We are fighting for the respect for public law and for the right of public justice, which are the foundations of civilization.

#### *Fighting for the Right*

We are fighting, as the Prime Minister said, for right against might. I do not attempt what Burke has declared to be impossible—to draw an indictment against a whole people ; but this I say, that the German nation has allowed itself to be organized as a military machine which recognizes no law except the law of force, which knows no right except the right of the strongest. It is against that we are fighting to-day.

The spirit in which this war was entered into was shown clearly in the words which were addressed to our Ambassador at Berlin by the German Chancellor. " You are going to war," he said, " for a scrap of paper." A scrap of paper, yes, but a scrap of paper with which was bound up a solemn obligation, and with that obligation the honour of a great nation. A scrap of paper in which was involved also the right to independence and liberty, the right even to existence, of all the small nations of the world. It is for that scrap of paper that Belgian soldiers have fought and died, that the Belgian people, by what they have done and what they have endured, have won for themselves immortal fame. It is for that scrap of paper and all that it means that we, too, have already watered with the blood of our sons the fair fields of France, and for it we shall conquer or perish.

*The Outrages in Belgium*

The words which I have quoted show not merely the spirit in which the war was entered into, but the spirit in which it is being conducted to-day. When reports first reached us of German atrocities in Belgium I hoped, for the sake of our common humanity, that they were untrue or at least exaggerated. We can entertain that hope no longer. The destruction of Louvain, to which the Prime Minister has referred, has proclaimed to the world in trumpet tones what German methods are. It has fixed upon German honour an indelible stain, and the explanations which it has been attempted to give of it have only made that stain the deeper. War at the best is terrible.

*The Crime comes from the Leaders*

It is not from the ordinary soldier, it is not from below that restraint can be expected. It must come, if it come at all, from above. But here outrages come not from below, but from above. They are not the result of accident, but of design. They are part of a principle—the principle by any means, at any expense to the lives of defenceless men or of helpless women and children, to spread terror in a country and facilitate German arms. This is, as the Prime Minister said, a moral and spiritual conflict, and believe me, in the long run, the moral and spiritual are stronger than the material forces.

The object of this meeting and of the speech to which we have just listened is to appeal to the manhood of our country to rally once again around the old flag. That appeal will not be made, is not being made, in vain. Our people had only to realize, as at first they did not quite realize, what issues were at stake, to come forward with all the spirit of their fathers. That lesson is being driven home now by influences stronger far than any speeches. It has been taught by the heroic steadfastness of the Belgian people. It is being taught now by the knowledge that but for the sure shield of our Navy, a shield which, if we fail to conquer, cannot save us, our fate to-day would be the fate of Belgium. It is being taught above all by the accounts, meagre though they are, of what has been done by our soldiers on the fields of battle.

*Britain not decadent*

With that mistaken estimate of themselves and of others, which is one of the explanations of this war, the Germans before and after this outbreak have spoken of us as a decadent nation. Do they say that to-day? Let the long-drawn-out fight which began at Mons give the answer. There our troops, pitted against the choicest troops of the German Army, and outnumbered by nearly three to one, as I believe, were undefeated and unbroken. And when the story of that fight comes to be written, it is my belief that it will form as glorious a page as is to be found in the whole annals of our history. The men will come. There is no doubt about that. Everywhere I find the same spirit: everyone asking, 'What can I do to help my country?' Many of those whom I am addressing are, like the Prime Minister and myself, unable to take their places in the fighting line. It is not right, it is not fair, that we should make an appeal for sacrifice to the patriotism of those only who are able and willing to fight our battles. An equal sacrifice is demanded of those who remain behind, and, let us not as a Government merely, but as a nation, realize our obligation and let us make a vow and keep it, that no dependant of any man who is fighting our battles shall go hungry while we have bread to eat. Let us realize also, as we have not always realized in the past, that our soldiers are children of the State, and that they have the first claim upon the resources of our nation.

## MR. LLOYD GEORGE

### THE SILVER BULLET—NEED FOR ECONOMY

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Local Government Board received on September 8, 1914, at the Treasury a deputation from the Association of Municipal Corporations. Sir Robert Fox, Town Clerk of Leeds, and Mr. Alderman Hobson, of Sheffield, submitted two resolutions on behalf of the Association :

(1) That the Government be requested to raise in their War Loan such an amount as they may think necessary, and from this sum to make advances to the Corporations at cost price, in order that the new capital for municipal undertakings may be secured upon the best possible terms, with power for the Corporation to repay on giving reasonable notice.

(2) That the Trustee Act be amended so as to provide that the mortgages of the Corporations mentioned in that Act shall be trustee securities and that the stock and mortgages of all Corporations whose boroughs have a population of over 20,000 be trustee securities.

It was explained that the Association was not proposing to ask the Government to advance money except for new works put in hand to provide employment during the war.

### VICTORY TO THE LONG PURSE

Mr. Lloyd George (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) said :

#### *No Competition between the District and the State*

It is obvious that it is to the interests of the municipalities and of the State that they should not be competing in the same market in what must be difficult borrowing times. I have no hesitation in saying that it is desirable that they should accede to the deputation's first request, that whatever money they borrowed for the purpose of responding to the invitation of the Local Government Board to make provision for distress in their districts should be advanced out of the War Loan that the Government put on the market. With regard to terms,

I think they must be subject to the same time obligations as the Government, who were quite prepared to lend at the rate of interest they paid themselves, with an allowance for the actual expenses to the State.

#### *To relieve Distress*

There is only one thing I should like to say in addition to that. We think it is absolutely necessary that the money should be spent for the relief of distress. I do not think this is the time to embark in great municipal enterprises which have no reference to distress. After all, we want every penny we can raise to fight the common enemy, and our first consideration ought to be to win. That is our first consideration. Unless we do that, there will be no country for municipalities or Governments to administer. The first thing is that we should come out triumphant in this struggle, and as finance is going to play a very great part, we must husband our resources. We must relieve distress. We must see that our people suffer as little as is possible under these terrible conditions, and therefore we are prepared to meet you ; but we do not want a penny spent which is not absolutely essential to relieve distress, because, after all, if you go into the market, it is the same market we go into. We raise the ten millions for you in the same market as we raise the ten millions for our armies on the Continent.

#### *The Value of Staying Power*

Therefore, in my judgement, the last few hundred millions may win this war. This is my opinion. The first hundred millions our enemies can stand just as well as we can, but the last they cannot, thank God ; and, therefore, I think cash is going to count much more than we possibly imagine at the present moment. We are only at the beginning now. Of course, if we have great victories, and smashing victories, that is all right, but then they may not come yet. We may have fluctuations, and things may last long. We are fighting a very tough enemy, who is very well prepared for the fight, and he will probably fight to the very end before he will accept the conditions upon which we can possibly make peace, if we are wise. Therefore we must ask the municipalities to assist us to that extent. That is where our resources will come in, not merely of men, but of cash.

*Victory to the Silver Bullets*

We have won with the silver bullets before. We financed Europe in the greatest war we ever fought and that is what won. Of course, British tenacity and British courage always come in, and they always will, but let us remember that British cash told, too. When the others were absolutely exhausted we were getting our second breath, and our third, and our fourth, and we shall have to spend our last before we are beaten. I want the municipalities to remember that. That is all. I am speaking now as the Treasury. The Local Government Board have their business of seeing that you go on spending. Our business is to see that you do not spend too much. Therefore, if you do not mind my putting this to you, purely speaking as the Treasury we will find the money for you if there is distress, but we do not want to find any money for you unless there is really actual insistent distress in the districts. It is very much better that you should get the people to work in things that are normal if you can. Our trade is not going. The seas are ours, and they will remain ours. We shall get not merely our own trade, except that of European countries, but we shall get a good deal of the enemy's trade as well, and of course there is always the business which is necessary in order to keep the war going. So that there will be a great deal of employment in the ordinary course of business, but there will be some districts that will be very hard hit.

*Municipalities should Save*

Now I do not want municipalities in districts which are not hard hit to spend money, because we want that money for fighting. It is much better used for fighting than in spending it in municipalities that do not need it. You do not mind my talking to you like this. I do not want you to raise money, therefore, for schemes in districts where there is on the whole plenty of work. On the other hand, if there is great distress, as there will be in some districts, then the Local Government Board and you between you will work out the matter in those districts. We must work as partners and work together—all parties, all sections of the people, the Government, and municipalities—until we carry the old country through to a triumphant conclusion.

## MR. ASQUITH

AT EDINBURGH, SEPTEMBER 18, 1914

### THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

A FORTNIGHT ago to-day, in the Guildhall of the City of London, I endeavoured to present to the nation and to the world the reasons which have compelled us, the people of all others who have the greatest interest in the maintenance of peace, to engage in the hazards and the horrors of war. I do not wish to repeat to-night in any detail what I then said.

#### *Diplomatic Documents as Evidence of the Causes of the War*

The war has arisen immediately and ostensibly, as every one knows, out of a dispute between Austria and Serbia, in which we in this country had no direct concern. The diplomatic history of those critical weeks—the last fortnight in July and the first few days of August—is now accessible to all the world. It has been supplemented during the last few days by the admirable and exhaustive dispatch of our late Ambassador at Vienna, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, a dispatch which I trust everybody will read, and no one who reads it can doubt that largely through the efforts of my right hon. friend and colleague, Sir Edward Grey, the conditions of a peaceful settlement of the actual controversy were already within sight when on July 31 Germany, by her own deliberate act, made war a certainty.

The facts are incontrovertible. They are not sought to be controverted, except, indeed, by the invention and circulation of such wanton falsehoods as that France was contemplating and even commencing the violation of Belgian territory as a first step on her road to Germany. The result is that we are at war, and we are at war—as I have already shown elsewhere, and as I repeat here to-night—for three reasons. In the first place, to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations and of what is properly called the public law of Europe; in the second place, to assert and to enforce the independence of free States, relatively small and weak, against the encroachments and the

violence of the strong ; and in the third place, to withstand, as we believe in the best interests not only of our own Empire, but of civilization at large, the arrogant claim of a single Power to dominate the development of the destinies of Europe.

*German Suggestions of British Insincerity*

Since I last spoke some faint attempts have been made in Germany to dispute the accuracy and the sincerity of this statement of our attitude and aim. It has been suggested, for instance, that our professed zeal for treaty rights and for the interests of small States is a newborn and simulated passion. What, we are asked, has Great Britain cared in the past for treaties or for the smaller nationalities except when she had some ulterior and selfish purpose of her own to serve ? I am quite ready to meet that challenge, and to meet it in the only way in which it could be met, by reference to history ; and out of many illustrations which I might take I will content myself with two, widely removed in point of time, but both, as it happens, very apposite to the present case. I will go back first to the war carried on at first against the revolutionary Government of France and then against Napoleon, which broke out in 1793 and which lasted for more than twenty years. We had then at the head of the Government in this country one of the most peace-loving Ministers who has ever presided over our fortunes, Mr. Pitt. For three years, from 1789 to 1792, he resolutely refused to interfere in any way with the revolutionary proceedings in France or in the wars that sprang out of them, and as late, I think, as February in 1792, in a memorable speech in the House of Commons, which shows amongst other things the shortness of human foresight, he declared that there never was a time when we in this country could more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace. And what was it that, within a few months of that declaration, led this pacific Minister to war ? It was the invasion of the treaty rights, guaranteed by ourselves, of a small European State—the then States General of Holland.

*Pitt vindicated the Rights of Holland in 1793*

For nearly two hundred years the Great Powers of Europe had guaranteed to Holland the exclusive navigation of the

river Scheldt. The French revolutionary Government invaded what is now Belgium, and as a first act of hostility to Holland declared the navigation of the Scheldt to be open. Our interest in that matter then, as now, was relatively small and insignificant. But what was Mr. Pitt's reply. I quote you the exact words he used in the House of Commons; they are so applicable to the circumstances of the present moment. This is in 1793 :

'England will never consent that another country should arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure the political system of Europe established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of the Powers.'

He went on to say that

'This House—the House of Commons—means substantial good faith to its engagements. If it retains a just sense of the solemn faith of treaties it must show a determination to support them,'

and it was in consequence of that stubborn and unyielding determination to maintain treaties, to defend small States, to resist the aggressive domination of a single Power that we were involved in a war which we had done everything to avoid and which was carried on upon a scale both as to area and as to duration up to then unexampled in the history of mankind.

#### *Gladstone upheld Belgian Neutrality in 1870*

That is one precedent. Let me give you one more. I come down to 1870, when this very treaty to which we are parties no less than Germany, and which guarantees the integrity and independence of Belgium, was threatened. Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister of this country, and he was, if possible, a stronger and more ardent advocate of peace even than Mr. Pitt himself. Mr. Gladstone, pacific as he was, felt so strongly the sanctity of our obligations that—though here again we had no direct interest of any kind at stake—he made agreements with France and Prussia to co-operate with either of the belligerents if the other violated Belgian territory. I should like to read a passage from a speech ten years later, delivered in 1880 by Mr. Gladstone himself in this city of Edinburgh, in which he reviewed that transaction and explained his reasons for it.

After narrating the facts which I have summarized, he said this : ' If we had gone to war '—which he was prepared to do—' we should have gone to war for freedom. We should have gone to war for public right, we should have gone to war to save human happiness from being invaded by a tyrannous and lawless Power. That ', Mr. Gladstone said, ' is what I call a good cause, gentlemen, though I detest war, and there are no epithets too strong if you will supply me with them that I will not endeavour to heap upon its head.'

### *German Aim of Domination*

So much for our own action in the past in regard to treaties and small States. But, faint as is this denial of this part of our case, it becomes fainter still, it dissolves into the thinnest of thin air, when it has to deal with our contention that we and our Allies are withstanding a Power whose aim is nothing less than the domination of Europe. It is, indeed, the avowed belief of the leaders of German thought, I will not say of the German people, of those who for many years past have controlled German policy, that such a domination, carrying with it the supremacy of what they call German culture and the German spirit, is the best thing that could happen to the world.

Let me, then, ask for a moment what is this German culture ? What is this German spirit of which the Emperor's armies are at present the missionaries in Belgium and in France ? Mankind owes much to Germany, a very great debt for the contributions she has made to philosophy, to science, and to the arts ; but that which is specifically German in the movement of the world in the last thirty years has been, on the intellectual side, the development of the doctrine of the supreme and ultimate prerogative in human affairs of material forces, and on the practical side the taking of the foremost place in the fabrication and the multiplication of the machinery of destruction. To the men who have adopted this gospel, who believe that power is the ' be all and end all ' of the State, naturally a treaty is nothing more than a piece of parchment, and all the old-world talk about the rights of the weak and the obligations of the strong is only so much threadbare and nauseating cant.

One very remarkable feature of this new school of doctrine,

whatever be its intellectual or its ethical merits, is that it has turned out, as an actual code for life, to be a very purblind philosophy.

*German Delusions about the British Empire*

The German culture, the German spirit, did not save the Emperor and his people from delusions and miscalculations as dangerous as they were absurd in regard to the British Empire. We were believed by these cultivated observers to be the decadent descendants of a people who, by a combination of luck and of fraud, had managed to obtain dominion over a vast quantity of the surface and the populations of the globe. This fortuitous aggregation which goes by the name of the British Empire was supposed to be so insecurely founded, and so loosely knit together, that, at the first touch of serious menace from without, it would fall to pieces and tumble to the ground. Our great Dominions were getting heartily tired of the Imperial connexion. India, it was notorious to every German traveller, was on the verge of open revolt, and here at home we, the people of this United Kingdom, were riven by dissension so deep and so fierce that our energies, whether for resistance or for attack, would be completely paralysed. What a fantastic dream! And what a rude awakening! And in this vast and grotesque, and yet tragic, miscalculation is to be found one of the roots, perhaps the main root, of the present war.

But let us go one step more. It has been said, 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and history will record that, when the die was cast and the struggle began, it was the disciples of that same creed who revived methods of warfare which have for centuries past been condemned by the common sense, as well as by the humanity, of the great mass of the civilized world.

*Mediaeval Barbarism of German Militarism*

Louvain, Malines, Termonde. These are names which will henceforward be branded on the brow of German culture. The ruthless sacking of the ancient and famous towns of Belgium is fitly supplemented by the story that reaches us only to-day from our own Head-quarters, in France, of the proclamation issued less than a week ago by the German authorities, who were for a moment, and, happily, for little more than a moment,

in occupation of the venerable city of Reims. Let me read, for it should be put on record, the concluding paragraph of the proclamation :

"With a view to securing adequately the safety of the troops, and to instil calm into the population of Reims, the persons named below [81 in number, and including all the leading citizens of the town] have been seized as hostages by the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. These hostages will be hanged at the slightest attempt at disorder. Also the town will be totally or partially burned and the inhabitants will be hanged for any infraction of the above."

"By order of German authorities."

Do not let it be forgotten that it is from a Power whose intellectual leaders are imbued with the idea that I have described, and whose generals in the field sanction and even direct those practices—it is from that Power the claim proceeds to impose its culture, its spirit—which means its domination—upon the rest of Europe. That is a claim, I say to you, to all my fellow countrymen, to every citizen and subject of the British Empire whose ears and eyes my words can reach—that is a claim that everything that is great in our past and everything that promises hope or progress in our future summons us to resist to the end.

### *The Magnitude of our Task*

The task—do not let us deceive ourselves—the task will not be a light one. Its full accomplishment—and nothing short of full accomplishment is worthy of our traditions or will satisfy our resolve—will certainly take months, it may even take years. I have come here to-night, not to ask you to count the cost, for no price can be too high to pay when honour and freedom are at stake, but to put before you, as I have tried to do, the magnitude of the issue and the supreme necessity that lies upon us as a nation, nay, as a brotherhood and family of nations, to rise to its height and acquit ourselves of our duty.

### *British Supremacy at Sea*

Our supremacy at sea has not been seriously questioned. Full supplies of food and of raw materials are making their

way to our shores from every quarter of the globe. Our industries, with one or two exceptions, maintain their activities. Unemployment is, so far, not seriously in excess of the average. The monetary situation has improved, and every effort that the zeal and the skill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the co-operation and expert advice of the bankers and business men of the country, can devise—every effort is being made to achieve what is most essential—the complete re-establishment of the foreign exchanges. Meanwhile, the merchant shipping of the enemy has been hunted from the seas, and our seamen are still, patiently or impatiently, waiting a chance to try conclusions with the opposing Fleet. Great and incalculable is the debt which we have owed during these weeks—and which in increasing measure we shall continue to owe, to our Navy. The Navy needs no help, and as the months roll on—thanks to a far-sighted policy in the past—its proportionate strength will grow.

If we turn to our Army we can say, with equal justice and pride, that during these weeks it has revived the most glorious records of the past. Sir John French and his gallant officers and men live in our hearts as they will live in the memories of those who come afterwards. But splendid achievements such as these—equally splendid in retirement and in advance—cannot be won without a heavy expenditure of life and limb, of equipment and supplies. Even now, at this very early stage, I suppose there is hardly a person here who is not suffering from anxiety and suspense. Some of us are plunged in sorrow for the loss of those we love, cut off, some of them, in the springtime of their young lives. We will not mourn for them overmuch.

‘One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.’

#### *Reinforcements from Abroad*

These gaps have to be filled. The wastage of modern war is relentless and almost inconceivable. We have—I mean His Majesty’s Government have—since the war began, dispatched to the front already considerably over 200,000 men, and the amplest provision has been made for keeping them supplied with all that was necessary in food, in stores, and in equipment.

They will very soon be reinforced by regular troops from India, from Egypt, and the Mediterranean, and in due time by the contingents which our Dominions are furnishing with such magnificent patriotism and liberality. We have with us here our own gallant Territorials, becoming every day a fitter and a finer force, eager and anxious to respond to any call, either at home or abroad, that may be made upon them.

But that is not enough. We must do still more. Already in little more than a month, we have half a million recruits for the four new Armies which, as Lord Kitchener told the country yesterday, he means to have ready to bring into the field. Enlisting, as we were last week, in a single day as many men as we have been accustomed to enlist in the course of a whole year, it is not, I think, surprising that the machinery has been overstrained, and there have been many cases of temporary inconvenience and hardship and discomfort. With time and patience and good organization these things will be set right, and the new scale of allowances which was announced in Parliament yesterday will do much to mitigate the lot of wives and children and dependants who are left behind. We want more men, and perhaps most of all help for training them. Every one in the whole of this kingdom who has in days gone by, as officer or as non-commissioned officer, served his country never had a greater or a more fruitful opportunity of service than is presented to him to-day.

#### *Scotland doing well*

We appeal to the manhood of the three kingdoms. To such an appeal I know well, coming from your senior representative in the House of Commons, that Scotland will not turn a deaf ear. Scotland is doing well, and indeed more than well, and no part of Scotland, I believe, in proportion better than Edinburgh. I cannot say with what pleasure I heard the figures given out by the Lord Provost, and those which have been supplied to me by the gallant gentleman who has the Scottish Command, which show, indeed, as we expected, that Scotland is more than holding her own.

In that connexion let me repeat what I said two weeks ago in London. We think it of the highest importance that, as far as possible, and subject to the accidents of war, people belonging

to the same place, breathing the same atmosphere, having the same associations, should be kept together.

### *A Great Opportunity*

I have only one word more to say. What is it that we can offer to our recruits? They come to us spontaneously, under no kind of compulsion, of their own free will, to meet a national and an Imperial need; we present to them no material inducement in the shape either of bounty or bribe, and they have to face the prospect of a spell of hard training from which most of the comforts and all the luxuries that any of them have been accustomed to are rigorously banished. But then, when they are fully equipped for their patriotic task, they will have the opportunity of striking a blow, it may be even of laying down their lives, not to serve the cause of ambition or aggression, but to maintain the honour and the good faith of our country, to shield the independence of free States, to protect against brute force the principles of civilization and the liberties of Europe.

### MR. ASQUITH'S APPEAL FOR MEN

On the same evening a recruiting meeting was held at Newport, Fife; and there a telegram from Mr. Asquith was read. It contained a declaration from the British Prime Minister. His words have often been quoted since then, and they may well be recorded in conjunction with the Edinburgh speech. Mr. Asquith said :

'I am very glad to hear of the patriotic resolution being made in East Fife to the Government. I heartily rejoice. This great emergency has joined men of all opinions together in one effort for the support of our arms.'

'We are fighting as a united Empire for a just and noble cause, and we cannot lay down our swords until, by the vindication of that cause, the peace of Europe has been assured.'

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MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S  
SPEECH TO LONDON WELSHMEN  
AT THE QUEEN'S HALL, SEPTEMBER 19, 1914  
ON GERMAN BARBARIETY

BEFORE Mr. Lloyd George spoke 'The March of the Men of Harlech' was sung by the audience. He said :

I have come here this afternoon to talk to my fellow countrymen about this great war and the part we ought to take in it. I feel my task is easier after we have been listening to the greatest battle-song in the world. There is no man in this room who has always regarded the prospects of engaging in a great war with greater reluctance, with greater repugnance, than I have done throughout the whole of my political life.

*War unavoidable without Dishonour*

There is no man either inside or outside of this room more convinced that we could not have avoided it without national dishonour. I am fully alive to the fact that whenever a nation has engaged in any war she has always invoked the sacred name of honour. Many a crime has been committed in its name ; there are some crimes being committed now. But all the same, national honour is a reality, and any nation that disregards it is doomed. Why is our honour as a country involved in this war ? Because in the first place we are bound in an honourable obligation to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbour that has lived peaceably, but she could not have compelled us because she was weak. The man who declines to discharge his debt because his creditor is too poor to enforce it is a blackguard.

We entered into this treaty, a solemn treaty, a full treaty, to defend Belgium and her integrity. Our signatures are attached to the document. Our signatures do not stand alone. This was not the only country to defend the integrity of Belgium—Russia, France, Austria, and Prussia, they are all there. Why

did they not perform the obligation ? It is suggested that this treaty is purely an excuse on our part. It is our low craft and cunning, just to cloak our jealousy of a superior civilization which we are attempting to destroy. Our answer is the action we took in 1870. Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister. Lord Granville, I think, was Foreign Secretary. I have never heard it alleged to their charge that they were ever jingoes. That treaty bond was this : We called upon the belligerent Powers to respect that treaty. We called upon France, we called upon Germany. At that time, bear in mind, the greatest danger to Belgium came from France and not from Germany. We intervened to protect Belgium against France exactly as we are doing now to protect her against Germany. We are proceeding exactly in the same way. We invited both the belligerent Powers to state that they had no intention of violating Belgian territory. What was the answer given by Bismarck ? He said it was superfluous to ask Prussia such a question in view of the treaties in force. France gave a similar answer. We received the thanks at that time of the Belgian people for our intervention in a very remarkable document. This is a document addressed by the Municipality of Brussels to Queen Victoria after that intervention :

‘The great and noble people over whose destinies you preside have just given a further proof of its benevolent sentiments towards this country. The voice of the English nation has been heard above the din of arms. It has asserted the principles of justice and right. Next to the unalterable attachment of the Belgian people to their independence, the strongest sentiment which fills their hearts is that of an imperishable gratitude to the people of Great Britain.’

#### *French Self-sacrifice in 1870*

That was in 1870. Three or four days after that document of thanks the French Army was wedged up against the Belgian frontier, every means of escape shut up by a ring of flame from Prussian cannon. There was one way of escape—by violating the neutrality of Belgium. The French on that occasion preferred ruin and humiliation to the breaking of their bond. The French Emperor, French marshals, 100,000 gallant Frenchmen in arms preferred to be carried captive to the strange land of

their enemy rather than dishonour the name of their country. It was the last French Army defeat. Had they violated Belgian neutrality the whole history of that war would have been changed. And yet it was the interest of France to break the treaty. She did not do it. It is the interest of Prussia to break the treaty, and she has done it. She avowed it with cynical contempt for every principle of justice.

#### *The Scrap of Paper*

She says treaties only bind you when it is to your interest to keep them. What is a treaty? says the German Chancellor. 'A scrap of paper.' Have you any £5 notes about you?—I am not calling for them. Have you any of those neat little Treasury £1 notes? If you have, burn them: they are only scraps of paper. What are they made of? Rags. What are they worth? The whole credit of the British Empire. 'Scraps of paper.' I have been dealing with scraps of paper within the last month. We suddenly found the commerce of the world coming to a standstill. The machine had stopped. I will tell you why. We discovered, many of us for the first time, that the machinery of commerce was moved by bills of exchange. I have seen some of them—wretched, crinkled, scrawled over, blotched, frowsy—and yet wretched little scraps of paper move great ships, laden with thousands of tons of precious cargo, from one end of the world to the other. What was the motive power behind them? The honour of commercial men. Treaties are the currency of international statesmanship. Let us be fair. German merchants and German traders have the reputation of being as upright and straightforward as any traders in the world; but if the currency of German commerce is to be debased to the level of that of her statesmanship, no trader, from Shanghai to Valparaiso, will ever look at a German signature again.

This doctrine of the scrap of paper, this doctrine which is proclaimed by Bernhardi, that treaties only bind a nation as long as it is to its interest, goes under the root of all public law.

#### *The Straight Road to Barbarism*

It is the straight road to barbarism. It is just as if you removed the magnetic pole whenever it was in the way of a German cruiser. The whole navigation of the seas would become dangerous, difficult, impossible, and the whole machinery of

civilization will break down if this doctrine wins in this war. We are fighting against barbarism, and there is only one way of putting it right. If there are nations that say they will only respect treaties when it is to their interests to do so, we must make it to their interests to do so for the future.

Just look at the interview which took place between our Ambassador and great German officials. When their attention was called to this treaty to which they were parties they said : 'We cannot help that.' Rapidity of action was the great German asset. There is a greater asset for a nation than rapidity of action, and that is honest dealing. What are her excuses ? She says that Belgium was plotting against her ; that Belgium was engaged in a great conspiracy with Britain and with France to attack her. Not merely is it not true, but Germany knows it is not true. What is her other excuse ? France meant to invade Germany through Belgium. Absolutely untrue. France offered Belgium five Army Corps to defend her if she were attacked. Belgium said : 'I don't require them, I have got the word of the Kaiser. Shall Caesar send a lie ?'

#### *Lies about Conspiracy*

All these tales about conspiracy have been vamped up since. A great nation ought to be ashamed to behave like a fraudulent bankrupt. It is not true what she says. She has deliberately broken this treaty, and we were in honour bound to stand by Belgium. Belgium has been treated brutally—how brutally we shall not yet know. We know already too much. What had she done ? Had she sent an ultimatum to Germany ? Had she challenged Germany ? Was she preparing to make war on Germany ? Had she inflicted any wrong upon Germany which the Kaiser was bound to redress ? She was one of the most unoffending little countries in Europe. There she was, peaceable, industrious, thrifty, hardworking, giving offence to no one. Her cornfields have been trampled down. Her villages have been burned to the ground. Her art treasures have been destroyed. Her men have been slaughtered ; yes, and her women and her children too. What had she done ? Hundreds and thousands of her people, their neat, comfortable little homes burnt to the dust, wandering homeless in their own land. What was their crime ? Their crime was that they trusted to the word of a Prussian King.

*Belgian Outrages*

I do not know what the Kaiser hopes to achieve by this war. I have a shrewd idea what he will accomplish ; but one thing is made certain, that no nation in future will ever commit that crime again. I am not going to enter into these tales. Many of them are untrue ; war is a grim, ghastly business at best, and I am not going to say that all that has been said in the way of tales of outrage is true. I will go beyond that, and say that if you turn two millions of men, forced, conscripted, and compelled and driven into the field, you will certainly get among them a certain number of men who will do things that the nation itself will be ashamed of. I am not depending on them. It is enough for me to have the story which the Germans themselves avow, admit, defend, proclaim. The burning and massacring, the shooting down of harmless people. Why ? Because, according to the Germans, they fired on German soldiers. What business had German soldiers there at all ? Belgium was acting in pursuance of a most sacred right, the right to defend your own home. But they were not in uniform when they shot. If a burglar broke into the Kaiser's palace at Potsdam, destroyed his furniture, shot down his servants, ruined his art treasures—especially those he made himself—burned his precious manuscripts, do you think he would wait until he got into uniform before he shot him down ? They were dealing with those who had broken into their households. But their perfidy has already failed. They entered Belgium to save time. They have not gained time, but they have lost their good name.

*Serbia*

But Belgium was not the only little nation that has been attacked in this war, and I make no excuse for referring to the case of the other little nation—the case of Serbia. The history of Serbia is not unblotted. What history in the category of nations is unblotted ? The first nation that is without sin, let her cast a stone at Serbia—a nation trained in a horrible school. But she won her freedom with her tenacious valour, and she has maintained it by the same courage. If any Serbians were mixed up in the assassination of the Grand Duke, they ought to be punished. Serbia admits that. The Serbian

Government had nothing to do with it. Not even Austria claimed that. The Serbian Prime Minister is one of the most capable and honoured men in Europe. Serbia was willing to punish any one of her subjects who had been proved to have any complicity in that assassination. What more could you expect ?

What were the Austrian demands ? Serbia sympathized with her fellow countrymen in Bosnia. That was one of her crimes. She must do so no more. Her newspapers were saying nasty things about Austria. They must do so no longer. That is the Austrian spirit.

### *The Zabern Spirit*

You had it in Zabern. How dare you criticize a Prussian official ? And if you laugh it is a capital offence. The colonel threatened to shoot them if they repeated it. Serbian newspapers must not criticize Austria. I wonder what would have happened had we taken up the same line about German newspapers. Serbia said : 'Very well, we will give orders to the newspapers that they must not criticize Austria in future, neither Austria, nor Hungary, nor anything that is theirs.' Who can doubt the valour of Serbia, when she undertook to tackle her newspaper editors ? She promised not to sympathize with Bosnia, promised to write no critical articles about Austria. She would have no public meetings at which anything unkind was said about Austria. That was not enough. She must dismiss from her Army officers whom Austria should subsequently name. But these officers had just emerged from a war where they were adding lustre to the Serbian arms—gallant, brave, efficient. I wonder whether it was their guilt or their efficiency that prompted Austria's action. Serbia was to undertake in advance to dismiss them from the Army—the names to be sent on subsequently. Can you name a country in the world that would have stood that ? Supposing Austria or Germany had issued an ultimatum of that kind to this country. ' You must dismiss from your Army and from your Navy all those officers whom we shall subsequently name.'—Well, I think I could name them now. Lord Kitchener would go. Sir John French would be sent about his business. General Smith-Dorrien would be no more, and I am sure that Sir John

Jellicoe would go. And there is another gallant old warrior who would go—Lord Roberts.

It was a difficult situation for a small country. Here was a demand made upon her by a great military Power who could put five or six men in the field for every one she could ; and that power supported by the greatest military Power in the world. How did Serbia behave ? It is not what happens to you in life that matters : it is the way in which you face it. And Serbia faced the situation with dignity. She said to Austria : ‘ If any officers of mine have been guilty and are proved to be guilty I will dismiss them.’ Austria said : ‘ That is not good enough for me.’ It was not guilt she was after, but capacity.

Then came Russia’s turn. Russia has a special regard for Serbia. She has a special interest in Serbia. Russians have shed their blood for Serbian independence many a time. Serbia is a member of her family, and she cannot see Serbia maltreated. Austria knew that. Germany knew that, and Germany turned round to Russia and said : ‘ I insist that you shall stand by with your arms folded whilst Austria is strangling your little brother to death.’ What answer did the Russian Slav give ? He gave the only answer that becomes a man. He turned to Austria and said : ‘ You lay hands on that little fellow and I will tear your ramshackle empire limb from limb.’ And he is doing it.

### *The Story of the Little Nations*

That is the story of the little nations. The world owes much to little nations, and to little men. This theory of bigness—you must have a big empire and a big nation and a big man—well, long legs have their advantage in a retreat. Frederick the Great chose his warriors for their height, and that tradition has become a policy in Germany. Germany applies that ideal to nations. She will only allow six-feet-two nations to stand in the ranks. But all the world owes much to the little five-feet-high nations. The greatest art of the world was the work of little nations. The most enduring literature of the world came from little nations. The greatest literature of England came from her when she was a nation of the size of Belgium fighting a great empire. The heroic deeds that thrill humanity through

generations were the deeds of little nations fighting for their freedom. Ah, yes, and the salvation of mankind came through a little nation. God has chosen little nations as the vessels by which He carries the choicest wines to the lips of humanity, to rejoice their hearts, to exalt their vision, to stimulate and to strengthen their faith, and if we had stood by when two little nations were being crushed and broken by the brutal hands of barbarism our shame would have rung down the everlasting ages.

#### *Russia's Aid*

But Germany insists that this is an attack by a low civilization upon a higher. Well, as a matter of fact the attack was begun by the civilization which calls itself the higher one. Now, I am no apologist for Russia. She has perpetrated deeds of which I have no doubt her best sons are ashamed. But what empire has not ? And Germany is the last empire to point the finger of reproach at Russia. But Russia has made sacrifices for freedom—great sacrifices. You remember the cry of Bulgaria when she was torn by the most insensate tyranny that Europe has ever seen. Who listened to the cry ? The only answer of the ‘higher civilization’ was that the liberty of Bulgarian peasants was not worth the life of a single Pomeranian soldier. But the rude barbarians of the north, they sent their sons by the thousands to die for Bulgarian freedom.

#### *Britain's Sacrifices for Freedom*

What about England ? You go to Greece, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and France, and all these lands could point out to you places where the sons of Britain have died for the freedom of these countries. France has made sacrifices for the freedom of other lands than her own. Can you name a single country in the world for the freedom of which the modern Prussian has ever sacrificed a single life ? The test of our faith, the highest standard of civilization, is the readiness to sacrifice for others. I would not say a word about the German people to disparage them. They are a great people ; they have great qualities of head, of hand, and of heart. I believe, in spite of recent events, there is as great a store of kindness in the German peasant as in any peasant in the world, but he has been drilled into a false idea of civilization—efficiency, capability.

But it is a hard civilization ; it is a selfish civilization ; it is a material civilization. They could not comprehend the action of Britain at the present moment. They say so. 'France', they say, 'we can understand. She is out for vengeance, she is out for territory—Alsace-Lorraine. Russia, she is fighting for mastery ; she wants Galicia.' They can understand vengeance, they can understand you fighting for mastery, they can understand you fighting for greed of territory ; they cannot understand a great Empire pledging its resources, pledging its might, pledging the lives of its children, pledging its very existence to protect a little nation that seeks for its defence.

### *The Results of German 'Civilization'*

God made man in His own image, high of purpose, in the region of the spirit. German civilization would re-create him in the image of a Diesler machine—precise, accurate, powerful, with no room for the soul to operate. That is the higher civilization. What is their demand ? Have you read the Kaiser's speeches ? If you have not a copy, I advise you to buy it ; they will soon be out of print—and you won't have any more of the same sort again. They are full of the clatter and bluster of German militarists—the mailed fist, the shining armour. Poor old mailed fist—its knuckles are getting a little bruised. Poor shining armour—the shine is being knocked out of it. But there is the same swagger and boastfulness running through the whole of the speeches. You saw that remarkable speech which appeared in the *British Weekly* this week. It is a very remarkable product, as an illustration of the spirit we have got to fight. It is his speech to his soldiers on the way to the front :

'Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, on me as German Emperor, the Spirit of God has descended. I am His weapon, His sword, and His Vice-gerent. Woe to the disobedient. Death to cowards and unbelievers.'

There has been nothing like it since the days of Mohammed. Lunacy is always distressing, but sometimes it is dangerous, and when you get it manifested in the head of the State and it has become the policy of a great empire it is about time it

should be ruthlessly put away. I do not believe he meant all these speeches, it was simply the martial straddle which he had acquired. But there were men around him who meant every word of it. This was their religion : Treaties : they tangle the feet of Germany in her advance ; cut them with the sword. Little nations : they hinder the advance of Germany ; trample them in the mire under the German heel. The Russian Slav : he challenges the supremacy of Germany in Europe ; hurl your legions at him and massacre him. Britain : she is a constant menace to the predominance of Germany in the world ; wrest the trident out of her hand.

#### *Germany's New Philosophy*

More than that, the new philosophy of Germany is to destroy Christianity—sickly sentimentalism about sacrifice for others, poor pap for German mouths. We will have the new diet, we will force it on the world. It will be made in Germany—a diet of blood and iron. What remains ? Treaties have gone ; the honour of nations gone ; liberty gone. What is left ? Germany—Germany is left—Deutschland über Alles. That is all that is left. That is what we are fighting, that claim to predominance of a civilization, a material one, a hard one, a civilization which, if once it rules and sways the world, liberty goes, democracy vanishes, and unless Britain comes to the rescue and her sons it will be a dark day for humanity.

#### *The Prussian Military Caste*

We are not fighting the German people. The German people are just as much under the heel of this Prussian military caste, and more so, thank God, than any other nation in Europe. It will be a day of rejoicing for the German peasant and artisan and trader when the military caste is broken. You know his pretensions. He gives himself the airs of a demi-god walking the pavement—civilians and their wives swept into the gutter : they have no right to stand in the way of the great Prussian Junker. Men, women, nations—they have all got to go. He thinks all he has got to say is, ‘We are in a hurry.’ That is the answer he gave to Belgium. ‘Rapidity of action is Germany’s greatest asset,’ which means, ‘I am in a hurry. Clear out of my way.’ You know the type of motorist, the terror of the

roads, with a 60-h.p. car. He thinks the roads are made for him, and anybody who impedes the action of his car by a single mile is knocked down. The Prussian Junker is the road hog of Europe. Small nationalities in his way hurled to the roadside, bleeding and broken ; women and children crushed under the wheels of his cruel car ; Britain ordered out of his road. All I can say is this. If the old British spirit is alive in British hearts that bully will be torn from his seat. Were he to win it would be the greatest catastrophe that befell democracy since the days of the Holy Alliance and its ascendancy.

#### *A Long but Victorious Road*

They think we cannot beat them. It will not be easy. It will be a long job. It will be a terrible war. But in the end we shall march through terror to triumph. We shall need all our qualities, every quality that Britain and its people possess—prudence in council, daring in action, tenacity in purpose, courage in defeat, moderation in victory—in all things faith, and we shall win. It has pleased them to believe and to preach the belief that we are a decadent, degenerate nation. They proclaim it to the world, through their professors, that we are an unheroic nation skulking behind our mahogany counters, whilst we are egging on more gallant races to their destruction. This is a description given to us in Germany—‘a timorous, craven nation, trusting to its Fleet.’ I think they are beginning to find their mistake out already, and there are half a million of young men of Britain who have already registered the vow to their King that they will cross the seas and hurl that insult to British courage against its perpetrators in the battle-fields of France and of Germany too. And we want half a million more, and we shall get them.

#### *The Part of Wales*

But Wales must continue doing her duty. I should like to see a Welsh Army in the field. I should like to see the race who faced the Normans for hundreds of years in a struggle for freedom—the race that helped to win Crecy, the race that fought for a generation under Glendower, against the greatest captain in Europe—I should like to see that race go and give a taste of its quality in this great struggle in Europe. And they are going to

do it. I envy you young people your opportunity. They have put up the age limit for the Army. But I have marched, I am sorry to say, a good many years even beyond that. But still, our turn will come. It is a great opportunity. It only comes once in many centuries to the children of men. For most generations sacrifice comes in drab weariness of spirit to men. It has come to-day to you—it has come to-day to us all in the form of the glory and thrill of a great movement for liberty that compels millions throughout Europe to the same noble end. It is a great war for the emancipation of Europe from the thrall-dom of a military caste which has thrown its shadows upon two generations of men and which has now plunged the world into a welter of bloodshed and terror.

### *The New Europe*

Some have already given their lives. There are some who have given more than their lives ; they have given the lives of those who are dear to them. I honour their courage, and may God be their comfort and their strength. Those who have fallen have died consecrated deaths. They have taken their part in the making of a new Europe—a new world. I can see signs of it coming through the glare of the battle-field. The people of all lands will gain more by this struggle than they comprehend at the present moment. They will be rid of the greatest menace to their freedom.

That is not all. There is another blessing, infinitely greater and more enduring, which is emerging already out of this great contest—a new patriotism, richer, nobler, more exalted than the old. I see a new recognition amongst all classes, high and low, shedding themselves of selfishness—a new recognition of the honour of a country does not depend merely upon the maintenance of its glory in the stricken field, but in protecting its homes from distress as well. It is a new patriotism which is bringing a new outlook over all classes. The great flood of luxury and of sloth which had submerged the land is receding, and a new Britain is appearing. We can see, for the first time, the fundamental things that matter in life, and that had been obscured from our vision by the tropical growth of prosperity.

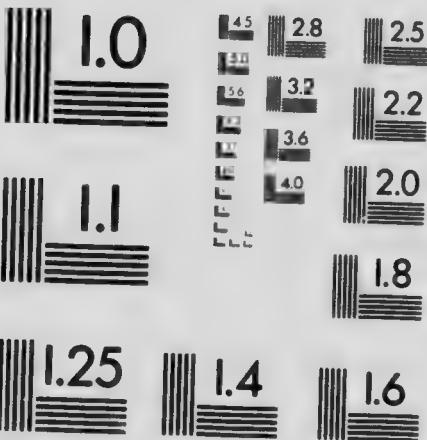
*What the War will do*

May I tell you in a simple parable what I think this war is doing for us? I know a valley in the north of Wales, between the mountains and the sea—a beautiful valley, snug, comfortable, sheltered by the mountains from all the bitter blast. It was very enervating, and I remember how the boys were in the habit of climbing the hill above the village to have a glimpse of the great mountains in the distance, and to be stimulated and freshened by the breezes which came from the hill-tops, and by the great spectacle of that valley. We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable, too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish, and the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation—the great peaks of honour we had forgotten—Duty, Patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the great pinnacle of Sacrifice, pointing like a rugged finger to heaven. We shall descend into the valleys again, but as long as the men and women of this generation last they will carry in their hearts the image of these great mountain peaks, whose foundations are not shaken though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war.



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## HERR VON BETHMANN HOLLWEG

(The German Chancellor)

IN THE REICHSTAG, DECEMBER 2, 1914

### GREAT BRITAIN TO BLAME FOR THE WAR

THE Imperial Chancellor said :

The Emperor, who is absent with the Army, has charged me to transmit his best wishes and cordial greetings to the German Reichstag, with whom he is known to be united till death in the stress of danger and in the common concern for the weal of the Fatherland. Our first thought goes out to the Kaiser and the Army and Navy--our soldiers who are fighting for the honour and greatness of the Empire.

Full of pride and unshakeable confidence, we look to them and to our Austro-Hungarian comrades in arms, who are firmly united to us, to fight great battles with brilliant bravery.

### *Turkey as an Ally*

Our most recent ally in battle, who has been obliged to join us, is the Ottoman Empire, which knows well that with the destruction of the German Empire it, too, would lose its national right to control its own destiny. As our enemies have formed a powerful coalition against us they will, I hope, find that the arm of our brave allies reaches the weak spots in their world-position.

On August 4 the Reichstag expressed the firm resolution of the whole people to undertake the war which had been forced upon them, and to defend their independence to the utmost. Since then great deeds have been accomplished. The incomparable gallantry of our troops has carried the war into the enemy's country. There we still stand firm and can regard the future with every confidence ; but the enemy's resistance is not broken. We are not yet at the end of our sacrifices.

The nation will continue to support those sacrifices with the same heroism as hitherto, for we must and will fight to a success-

ful end our defensive war for right and freedom. We will then remember how our defenceless compatriots in hostile countries were maltreated in a manner which is a disgrace to all civilization. The world must learn that no one can hurt a hair on the head of a German subject with impunity.

#### *Russia Apparently Responsible for the War*

It is evident to us who is responsible for this, the greatest of all wars. The apparent responsibility falls on those in Russia who ordered and carried out the mobilization of the Russian Army. The real responsibility, however, falls on the British Government.

#### *Britain the Real Aggressor*

The Cabinet in London could have made the war impossible if it had without ambiguity declared at Petrograd that Great Britain would not allow a Continental war to develop from the Austro-Serbian conflict.

Such a declaration would also have obliged France to take energetic measures to restrain Russia from undertaking war-like operations. Then our action as mediators between Petrograd and Vienna would have been successful, and there would have been no war. But Great Britain did not act thus. Great Britain was aware of the bellicose machinations of the partly irresponsible but powerful group around the Tsar. She saw how the ball was rolling, but placed no obstacle in its path. In spite of all its assurances of peace, London informed Petrograd that Great Britain was on the side of France, and consequently on the side of Russia.

#### *Britain's Object*

The Cabinet of London allowed this monstrous world-wide war to come about, hoping, with the help of the Entente, to destroy the vitality of England's greatest European competitor on the markets of the world. Therefore England and Russia have before God and men the responsibility for the catastrophe which has fallen upon Europe. Belgian neutrality, which England pretended to defend, was nothing but a disguise. On the evening of August 2 we informed Brussels that we were obliged, in the interests of self-defence and in consequence of the war plans of France, which were known to us, to march through Belgium, but already on the afternoon of the

same day, August 2, before anything of our *démarche* in Brussels could have been known in London, the British Government promised France unconditional assistance in case the German Fleet should attack the French coast. Nothing was said about Belgian neutrality.

How can England maintain that she drew the sword because we violated Belgian neutrality? How could the British statesmen, whose past is well known, speak at all of Belgian neutrality? When, on August 4, I spoke of the wrong which we were committing with our march into Belgium, it was not yet established whether the Belgian Government at the last hour would not desire to spare the country and retire under protest to Antwerp. For military reasons the possibility of such a development on August 4 must be left blank in all circumstances.

#### *The 'Guilt' of Belgium*

As to the guilt of the Belgian Government, many indications were already known at that time, but there were no positive and written proofs. Now, however, that it is demonstrated, by documents found in Brussels, how the Belgians surrendered their neutrality to England, the entire world knows two facts. One is that when our troops, on the night of August 3-4, entered Belgian territory, they were on the ground of a State which had given up its neutrality long ago. The other is: not for the sake of the neutrality of Belgium, which she had herself undermined, did England declare war on us, but because she believed that she would be able to master us with the help of two great Continental Powers.

#### *Britain at War since August 2*

Since August 2, since her promise to assist France, England was longer neutral and was actually at war with us, and the argument that the declaration of war was a sequel to the violation of Belgian neutrality is nothing but a piece of play-acting performed to mystify the English people and neutral States. Now that the Anglo-Belgian war plans are unveiled in their smallest details, the policy of British statesmen is branded before the tribunal of history for all times.

But British diplomacy went further. At England's request Japan snatches away heroic Kiaochau and violates the neutrality of China. Has England interfered in this violation of

neutrality? Has England shown a care for neutral States in this case? When, five years ago, I was called to office, the Triple Alliance was opposed by a firmly united Entente. England's work was designed to serve the known principle of the balance of power, which means in plain German that the principle, followed for centuries by British policy and directed against the strongest continental Power, should find its strongest tool in the Triple Entente. This proves from the beginning the aggressive character of the Entente towards the plainly defensive tendencies of the Triple Alliance.

#### *The Germ of the Explosion*

This was the germ of the forcible explosion. German policy was obliged to try to avert the danger of war by an understanding with the individual Powers of the Entente. At the same time, she was obliged to strengthen her defensive forces so that she should be prepared if war should come all the same. We did both. In France we always encountered ideas of *revanche* fed by ambitious politicians. With Russia some agreements were concluded; but Russia's firm alliance with France, her antagonism to us and our ally Austria-Hungary, her Pan-slavistic desire for power, her artificial hatred for Germany, made it impossible to conclude an agreement which, in the case of a political crisis, would exclude the danger of war.

#### *British Insular Intellect*

England was comparatively free. Here the best attempt at an understanding could be made which would have effectively guaranteed the peace of the world. I acted accordingly. The way was narrow, which I knew well. For decades the British insular intellect has been evolving the political principle, the dogma that the arbitrament of the world is due to England, which she can only maintain by undisputed supremacy on sea and the much-quoted balance of power on the Continent.

I never hoped to break the old English principle by persuasion. What I believed possible was that the growing power of Germany and the growing danger of war could compel England to perceive that this old principle was untenable and unpractical, and that a peaceable arrangement with Germany was preferable; but that dogma always paralysed the possibility of an understanding.

*The Rapprochement of 1911*

After the crisis of 1911, public opinion forced British rulers to a *rapprochement* towards Germany. By wearisome work an understanding was finally attained in different disputed questions of economical interest which related to Africa and Asia Minor. This understanding should have diminished possible political friction if the free development of our strength were not impeded. Both peoples had sufficient space to measure their strength in peaceful competition. This was the principle always upheld by German policy. But while we were negotiating, England was always thinking of strengthening her relations with Russia and France. The decisive factor was that more binding military agreements for the case eventually of a continental war were concluded outside the political sphere.

*Britain's Secret Negotiations*

England negotiated, if possible, secretly. If anything leaked through of importance, it was diminished in Press and Parliament. It could not be concealed from us. The whole situation was as follows: England was willing to come to an understanding with us in individual questions, but the first principle always was that Germany's free development of strength must be checked by the balance of power. We did not fail to warn the British Government. As recently as the beginning of July I notified the British Government that we knew of the secret naval negotiations with Russia concerning the naval convention. I pointed out the serious danger which British policy meant for the peace of the world. A fortnight later what I predicted occurred. When war had broken out England dropped her disguise. She loudly announced that she would fight till Germany was conquered in an economical and military sense. We have only one answer—Germany cannot be destroyed. As her military strength has stood the test, so has the financial strength of Germany.

Japan joined our enemies from a desire to seize as booty the monument of German culture in the Far East. On the other hand, we have found an ally in Turkey, as all the Moslem peoples want to throw off the English yoke and shatter the foundations of England's colonial power. Under the banner of our Army and the flag of our Fleet we shall conquer.

## MR. BONAR LAW

### ON A PAGE OF SECRET HISTORY

#### THE ACTION OF THE OPPOSITION ON AUGUST 2, 1914

At an informal meeting of Unionist chairmen and agents of parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain at the Hotel Cecil on December 14, 1914, Mr. Bonar Law told of the unhesitating support given to the Cabinet by the Unionist leaders in the critical days immediately preceding Britain's declaration of war. He said :

#### *The Sinking of Party*

The bond of union which brings us together this afternoon is our connexion with a political party, but at such a time it would be impossible for me to deliver, and I am sure it would be intolerable for you to listen to, a party speech. I am glad, however, to have the opportunity of meeting representatives of our party throughout the country in order to put clearly before them the principle upon which we who are responsible for the party in Parliament have acted since this crisis arose.

Before the war, as you well know, party differences were as acute as they have ever been in this country ; party passions were inflamed to such an extent that I saw no possible outlet which would not be disastrous to the country. In a moment the whole situation was changed. The war cloud which had been gathering over Europe, which for years we had looked upon with growing anxiety, suddenly burst, and we realized that we were face to face with the gravest danger which, as a nation, we have ever encountered. We realized also that that danger could only be overcome if national resources were utilized to the utmost, and we could act as a united nation. Though the Opposition plays a recognized part in our form of government, it has no official position. We recognized, however, that we represent a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons, and in the days of suspense, especially in the days between the time when war had actually broken

out and the position of this country became clear, we came to the conclusion that we were bound to state plainly what our views were, and what action we were prepared to take.

*The Unionist Leaders' Letter*

On the eventful Sunday, the 2nd of August, when the decision of the Government was still in doubt, a letter was sent to the Prime Minister on the joint authority of Lord Lansdowne and myself, in which we declared that in our belief it was the duty of this country to join her Allies, and in which we promised, in that case, to support the Government. There can be no harm in publishing this letter, and I think it might interest you to hear its exact wording. It was in these terms :

2nd August, 1914.

Dear Mr. Asquith.—Lord Lansdowne and I feel it our duty to inform you that in our opinion, as well as in that of all the colleagues whom we have been able to consult, it would be fatal to the honour and security of the United Kingdom to hesitate in supporting France and Russia at the present juncture; and we offer our unhesitating support to the Government in any measures they may consider necessary for that object.—Yours very truly,

A. BONAR LAW.

That letter formed the keynote of our subsequent action. In it we gave a definite pledge, and I do not think that any one will deny that we have kept that pledge, both in the letter and in the spirit. Such a pledge is not perhaps so easy to keep as those who have not been actually engaged in party warfare might imagine. To a party politician a fighting policy is as the breath of his nostrils, and in such a case there is a strong temptation, while prefacing every speech with protestations of desire to help in the war, to continue by a scarcely veiled attack on the Government as a whole, or on a particular minister.

*The Lessons of History*

How difficult it is to keep such a pledge is shown by the whole course of history. Many times in the past, nations, with more or less free institutions, have been brought to the verge of ruin because, even in the face of danger from without, they have not

been able to stifle internal conflict. In our own country also there is no single instance since parliamentary government was introduced where the Government engaged in conducting a war has not been hampered and harassed by the action of the Opposition. That was true in the wars of Marlborough ; it was true still more emphatically in the struggle against Napoleon ; and it was true, as you all know, in the last war in which this country was engaged.

We have not acted in that way. At the outset we laid down the principle that we would make no criticism for the sake of discrediting the Government, that we would make no criticism which by any possibility could injure the country. It is not, however, good either for an individual or for a Government to know that they are free from criticism ; and such a principle is, therefore, very difficult to carry out in practice. I do not claim that we have been altogether successful. I think it is quite possible that we have made the mistake not of criticizing the Government too much, but of criticizing them too little ; but if a mistake had to be made, I should prefer that it were made in that direction rather than in the other.

#### *Conduct in the Commons*

As illustrating the principle on which we have acted, take this example in the House of Commons. Before the House met the country knew of the naval disaster in the Pacific. On the first day of the Session I asked the Government to give us full particulars of that disaster. They did not do so. They told us that criticism with partial knowledge of the facts could only do harm, and that it was not possible in the public interest to give all the facts. We accepted their decision, and instead of pressing them upon the point, just because I knew that there was widespread anxiety about the Navy, and because I knew that that anxiety was in itself a misfortune, I went out of my way on two occasions to express what was indeed my real belief, that on the whole the work of the Navy had been completely successful. Now we have the news, and nobody rejoices in it more than we, that the disaster of the Pacific has been avenged by the glorious victory in the South Atlantic. I think, therefore, that I may justly and without exaggeration make this claim, that no political party has ever more sincerely and

wholeheartedly tried to serve the country than we have done during this war. In making this statement I do not claim any merit either for Lord Lansdowne or for myself. We have not only been supported by the whole party in the course we have taken, but, in my belief, the party would not have tolerated any other action from its leaders.

Let me say also that, as it seems to me, the press of this country has shown a restraint in the publication of news and a readiness to bow to the wishes of the Government which is due, not to the fear of the Tower, but to motives of patriotism, and which ought to be, and I am sure is, fully recognized both by the Government and by the nation.

#### *The Need for United Action*

Now what of the future? The war can only be brought to a successful issue if the nation is united. In France, where the danger was the same, they decided, and I think rightly, that a national war could best be conducted by a National Government, a Government formed from all parties. Here it was not necessary to take that step, for the Government knew that in the conduct of the war they could rely upon our support. A Government supported by the whole nation is necessary to end the war; but the need for unity will not end with victory. We are told by our enemies that it is we who have caused that war from motives of aggression, or from the still baser motive of commercial jealousy. We know better. We know that we can gain nothing from this war, except two things: peace when it is over, and security for peace in the future. But that security for the future we must have, and to secure it a united nation will still be necessary.

No one has a right to be one of the leaders of a political party who ignores the interests of that party. I do not ignore them, but I express to you now what is my real belief, and I am sure you share it, that we can best serve our party by thinking only of our duty to our country. Party conflict will, of course, revive, but when it does, we shall not fight less vigorously, nor less successfully, because we have postponed it now; and when that time comes, whatever else may be defective in our equipment, there will be no lack of foundation for criticism.

*The Failure of Germany*

But we who are met here to-day, like every one else throughout the country, are thinking only of the war. We have been more than four months at war, and in looking back upon what has happened during that time, we can look forward to the future not only with hope but with complete confidence. Germany has failed. As we know from the declaration of the German Chancellor himself, who used it as an excuse for the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, the only chance of German success was that they should crush France rapidly before the unlimited numbers of Russian soldiers could be brought into play. They have not crushed France; they cannot crush France, and already the Russian Armies are on their frontiers.

*A Long Struggle to an Assured Future*

We have a terrible struggle in front of us, for no one will deny either the bravery or the resourcefulness of German soldiers, and in consequence of that struggle sorrow will fill many a home, but the final result is not in doubt.

War is horrible, I have always hated it, and in that feeling I represent, I am sure, the views of our party, for there never has been any difference between us and our opponents in the detestation of war; the difference has only been as to the best means of securing peace. War is horrible. It brings out all the worst qualities of humanity, as we have seen in the cruelties in Belgium; but it brings out also the best. The Germans told us that as a nation we were decadent. The result of this war already has been to show that the national fibre is sound to the core. Our sailors and our soldiers have upheld, and more than upheld, the reputation of the country. Never in our whole history have our soldiers shown greater devotion, more splendid heroism, or more cheerful courage than they have displayed on the battlefields of France. But it is not only on the field of battle that our national soundness has been shown. In the zeal for recruiting, statements have been made about the slowness of our men to join the Colours which have done us great harm abroad, and which are entirely unfounded. The marvellous thing is not that a few have failed to do so—but that so many have joined.

*Success of the Voluntary System*

Never in the whole history of the world has an army, such as we require, been raised by voluntary enlistment. That system failed in the American Civil War, but it has not failed here. We have got so far, and I am sure we shall get, all the men we need. From every part of the country, and in every rank, men have made sacrifices ; not only risking their lives, but giving up their prospects and bringing hardships on their families, for which the nation cannot be too grateful. These sacrifices are great, and a Committee is now sitting, which was appointed by the House of Commons at my suggestion, to consider the claims of those men. It is a very difficult subject, and though the Committee is meeting constantly it will take longer to come to a decision than at first I hoped ; but this you can be sure of that that Committee was formed with no thought of party advantage ; and that it is conducting its inquiries with no other object than to endeavour to treat fairly, generously, and wisely the men who are risking their lives for us.

We are living in the midst of one of the great events of history. We are playing our parts, important or unimportant, on a great stage, and the greatest honour, as I think, which can come to us as a party will be that when the war is over we can truthfully say we ' nothing common did, or n. o., upon that memorable scene'.

# LORD KITCHENER'S APPEAL FOR MORE MEN

AT A GUILDFALL MEETING

## THE NATIONAL REGISTER AS AN AID TO RECRUITING

Mr. Chairman—the remarks that I have found it necessary to make on the subject of recruiting have been mainly addressed to the House of Lords; but I have felt that the time has now come when I may with advantage avail myself of the courteous invitation of the Lord Mayor to appear among you, and in this historic Guildhall make another and a larger demand on the resources of British manhood. Enjoying, as I do, the privilege of a Freeman of this great City, I can be sure that words uttered in the heart of London will be spread broadcast throughout the Empire.

### *The Dominions and their Efforts*

Our thoughts naturally turn to the splendid efforts of the Oversea Dominions and India, who, from the earliest days of the war, have ranged themselves side by side with the Mother Country. The prepared armed forces of India were the first to take the field, closely followed by the gallant Canadians who are now fighting alongside their British and French comrades in Flanders, and are there presenting a solid and impenetrable front against the enemy.

In the Dardanelles the Australians and New Zealanders, combined with the same elements, have already accomplished a feat of arms of almost unexampled brilliancy, and are pushing the campaign to a successful conclusion. In each of these great Dominions new and large contingents are being prepared, while South Africa, not content with the successful conclusion of the arduous campaign in South-West Africa, is now offering large forces to engage the enemy in the main theatre of war.

### *Vital Need for Men*

Strengthened by the unflinching support of our fellow citizens across the seas, we seek to develop our own military

resources to their utmost limits, and this is the purpose which brings us together to-day. Napoleon, when asked what were the three things necessary for a successful war, replied, 'Money, money, money.' To-day we vary that phrase, and say, 'Men, material, and money.' As regards the supply of money for the war, the Government are negotiating a new Loan, the marked success of which is greatly due to the very favourable response made by the City. To meet the need for material, the energetic manner in which the new Ministry of Munitions is coping with the many difficulties which confront the production of our great requirements affords abundant proof that this very important work is being dealt with in a highly satisfactory manner.

There still remains the vital need for men to fill the ranks of our armies, and it is to emphasize this point and bring it home to the people of this country that I have come here this afternoon. When I took up the office that I hold, I did so as a soldier, not as a politician, and I warned my fellow countrymen that the war would be not only arduous, but long. In one of my earliest statements, made after the beginning of the war, I said that I should require 'More men, and still more, until the enemy is crushed'. I repeat that statement to-day with even greater insistence. All the reasons which led me to think in August 1914 that this war would be a prolonged one hold good at the present time. It is true we are in an immeasurably better situation now than ten months ago, but the position to-day is at least as serious as it was then.

#### *German Preparedness*

The thorough preparedness of Germany, due to her strenuous efforts, sustained at high pressure for some forty years, has issued in a military organization as complex in character as it is perfect in machinery. Never before has any nation been so elaborately organized for imposing her will upon the other nations of the world; and her vast resources of military strength are wielded by an autocracy which is peculiarly adapted for the conduct of war. It is true that Germany's long preparedness has enabled her to utilize her whole resources from the very commencement of the war, while our policy is one of gradually increasing our effective forces. It might be

said with truth that she *must* decrease, while we *must* increase.

### *Our Voluntary System*

Our voluntary system, which as you well know has been the deliberate choice of the English people, has rendered it necessary that our forces in peace time should be of relatively slender dimensions, with a capacity for potential expansion ; and we have habitually relied on time being allowed us to increase our armed forces during the progress of hostilities.

The opening of the war found us, therefore, in our normal military situation, and it became our immediate task--concurrently with the dispatch of the first Expeditionary Force--to raise new armies, some of which have already made their presence felt at the front, and to provide for a strong and steady stream of reinforcements to maintain our Army in the field at full fighting strength.

From the first there has been a satisfactory and constant flow of recruits, and the falling-off in numbers recently apparent in recruiting returns has been, I believe, in great degree due to circumstances of a temporary character.

### *The Great Response to the Call*

It would be difficult to exaggerate the value of the response that has been made to my previous appeals, but I am here to-day to make another demand on the manhood of the country to come forward to its defence. I was from the first unwilling to ask for a supply of men in excess of the equipment available for them. I hold it to be most undesirable that soldiers keen to take their place in the field should be thus checked and possibly discouraged, or that the completion of this training should be hampered owing to lack of arms. We have now happily reached a period when it can be said that this drawback has been surmounted and that the troops in training can be supplied with sufficient arms and material to turn them out as efficient soldiers.

When the great rush of recruiting occurred in August and September of last year, there was a natural difficulty in finding accommodation for the many thousands who answered to the call for men to complete the existing armed forces and the New Armies. Now, however, I am glad to say, we have

throughout the country provided accommodation calculated to be sufficient and suitable for our requirements. Further, there was in the early autumn a very natural difficulty in clothing and equipping the newly raised units. Now we are able to clothe and equip all recruits as they come in, and thus the call for men is no longer restricted by any limitations such as the lack of material for training.

It is an axiom that the larger an army is, the greater is its need of an ever-swelling number of men of recruitable age to maintain it at its full strength ; yet, at the very same time, the supply of those very men is automatically decreasing. Nor must it be forgotten that the great demand which has arisen for the supply of munitions, equipment, &c., for the armed forces of this country and of our Allies also, as well as the economic and financial necessity of keeping up the production of manufactured goods, involves the retention of a large number of men in various trades and manufactures, many of whom would otherwise be available for the Colours.

#### *Appreciation of Voluntary Work*

In respect of our great and increasing military requirements for men, I am glad to state how much we are indebted to the help given to the Recruiting Staff of the Regular Army and to the Territorial Associations throughout the country by the many Voluntary Recruiting Committees formed in all the counties and cities and in many important boroughs for this purpose. The recruiting by the Regular Staff and the Territorial Associations has been most carefully and thoroughly carried out, and the relations between them and the various committees I have referred to have been both cordial and mutually helpful. The Parliamentary Recruiting Committee has done most excellent work in organizing meetings and providing speakers in all parts of the country in conjunction with the various local committees. It is impossible to refer by name to all committees that have helped, but I must just mention the work of the Lord Mayor's Committee in the City of London ; of the committees in the several districts of Lancashire, where we are much indebted to the organizing powers and initiative of Lord Derby ; and of the several committees in Greater London, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow,

Dublin, and Belfast. To these must be added the Central Recruiting Council for Ireland, with a number of county committees, as well as the Automobile Association.

#### *A Further Step Needful*

The time has now come when something more is required to ensure the demands of our forces overseas being fully met, and to enable the large reserve of men imperatively required for the proper conduct of the war to be formed and trained. The public has watched with eager interest the growth and the rapidly acquired efficiency of the New Armies, whose dimensions have already reached a figure which only a short while ago would have been considered utterly unthinkable. But there is a tendency perhaps to overlook the fact that these larger Armies require still larger reserves, to make good the wastage at the front. And one cannot ignore the certainty that our requirements in this respect will be large, continuous, and persistent ; for one feels that our gallant soldiers in the fighting line are beckoning, with an urgency at once imperious and pathetic, to those who remain at home to come out and play their part too.

Recruiting meetings, recruiting marches, and the unwearyed labours of the recruiting officers, committees, and individuals have borne good fruit, and I look forward with confidence to such labours being continued as energetically as hitherto.

#### *A Registration Bill*

But we must go a step further, so as to attract and attach individuals who, from shyness, or other causes, have not yet yielded to their own patriotic impulses. The Government have asked Parliament to pass a Registration Bill, with the object of ascertaining how many men and women there are in the country between the ages of 15 and 65, eligible for the national service, whether in the Navy or Army, or for the manufacture of munitions, or to fulfil other necessary services. When this registration is completed we shall anyhow be able to note the men between the ages of 19 and 40 not required for munition or other necessary industrial work, and therefore available, if physically fit, for the fighting line. Steps will be taken to approach, with a view to enlistment, all possible candidates for the Army—unmarried men to be preferred before married men, as far as may be.

Of course the work of completing the Registration will extend over some weeks, and meanwhile it is of vital and paramount importance that as large a number of men as possible should press forward to enlist so that the men's training may be complete when they are required for the field. I would urge all employers to help in this matter, by releasing all men qualified for service with the Colours and replacing them by men of unrecruitable age, or by women, as has already been found feasible in so many cases. An acknowledgement is assuredly due to those patriotic employers who have not merely permitted but actively encouraged their men to enlist, and have helped the families of those who have joined the Colours.

When the registration becomes operative I feel sure that the Corporation of the City of London will not be content with its earlier efforts, intensely valuable as they have been, but will use its great facilities to set an example of canvassing for the cause. This canvass should be addressed with stern emphasis to such unpatriotic employers as, according to returns, have restrained their men from enlisting.

#### *Danger of stating Figures*

What the numbers required are likely to be it is clearly inexpedient to shout abroad. Our constant refusal to publish either these or any other figures likely to prove useful to the enemy needs neither explanation nor apology. It is often urged that if more information were given as to the work and whereabouts of various units recruiting would be strongly stimulated. But this is the precise information which would be of the greatest value to the enemy, and it is agreeable to note that a German Prince in high command ruefully recorded the other day his complete ignorance as to our New Armies.

But one set of figures, available for everybody, and indicating with sufficient particularity the needs of our forces in the field, is supplied by the casualty lists. With regard to these lists, however, serious and sad as they necessarily are, let two points be borne in mind. First, that a very large percentage of the casualties represents comparatively slight hurts, the sufferers from which in time return to the front ; and, secondly, that, if the figures seem to run very high, the magnitude of the

operations is thereby suggested. Indeed, these casualty lists, whose great length may now and again indeed undue depression of spirits, are an instructive indication of the huge extent of the operations undertaken now reached by the British forces in the field.

### *People Apparently Indispensable*

There are two classes of men to whom my appeal must be addressed—

(1) Those for whom it is claimed that they are indispensable, whether for work directly associated with our military forces or for other purposes, public or private ; and

(2) Those to whom has been applied the ugly name of 'shirkers'.

As regards the former the question must be searchingly driven home whether their duties, however responsible and however technical, cannot in this time of stress be adequately carried out by men unfit for active military service or by women—and here I cannot refrain from a tribute of grateful recognition to the large number of women, drawn from every class and phase of life, who have come forward and placed their services unreservedly at their country's disposal. The harvest, of course, is looming large in many minds. It is possible that many men engaged in agriculture have so far not come forward owing to their harvest duties. This may be a good reason at the moment, but can only be accepted if they notify their names at once as certain recruits on the very day after the harvest has been carried. Also the question of the private employment of recruitable men for any sort of domestic service is an acute one, which must be gravely and unselfishly considered by master and man alike.

### *'Slackers' and Civil Ties*

There has been much said about ' slackers '—people, that is to say, who are doing literally nothing to help the country. Let us by all means avoid over-statement in this matter. Let us make every allowance for the very considerable number of men, over and above those who are directly rendering their country genuine service, who are engaged indirectly in patriotic work, or are occupied in really good and necessary work at

home. Probably the residuum of absolute 'do-nothings' is relatively small, or at least smaller than is commonly supposed. At any rate, it is not of those that I am speaking for the moment. I am anxious specially to address myself to the large class drawn from the category of those who devote themselves to more or less patriotic objects or to quite good and useful work of one kind or another. I want each one of those to put this question to himself seriously and candidly : 'Have I a real reason for not joining the Army, or is that which I put before myself as a reason, after all only an excuse ?'

#### *The Tribunal of Conscience*

Excuses are often very plausible and very arguable, and seem quite good until we examine them in the light of duty before the tribunal of our conscience. To take only a single instance. Are there not many special constables who, being of recruitable age, are really qualified to undertake the higher service which is open to them ? Perhaps the favourite excuse for neglecting to join the Colours is one which appears in various forms—'I am ready to go when I am fetched' ; 'I suppose they will let me know when they want me' ; 'I don't see why I shoul' join while so many others remain behind' ; 'To be fair, let us all be asked to join together' ; 'After all, if the country only entreats and does not command us to enlist, does not that prove that it is not a duty to go, that only those need go who choose ?'

#### *The Moral Duty to go*

Granted that legally you need only go if you choose, is it not morally 'up to you' to choose to go ? If you are only ready to go when you are fetched, where is the merit of that ? Where is the patriotism of it ? Are you only going to do your duty when the law says you must ? Does the call to duty find no response in you until reinforced, let us rather say superseded, by the call of compulsion ?

It is not for me to tell you your duty ; that is a matter for your conscience. But make up your minds, and do so quickly. Don't delay to take your decision and, having taken it, to act upon it at once. Be honest with yourself. Be certain that your so-called reason is not a selfish excuse. Be sure that here-

after, when you look back upon to-day and its call to duty, you do not have cause, perhaps bitter cause, to confess to your conscience that you shirked your duty to your country and sheltered yourself under a mere excuse.

It has been well said that in every man's life there is one supreme hour towards which all earlier experience moves and from which all future results may be reckoned. For every individual Briton, as well as for our national existence, that solemn hour is now striking. Let us take heed to the great opportunity it offers and which most assuredly we must grasp *now and at once—or never.* Let each man of us see that we spare nothing, shirk nothing, shrink from nothing, if only we may lend our full weight to the impetus which shall carry to victory the cause of our honour and of our freedom.

## MR. LLOYD GEORGE

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, DECEMBER 20, 1915

### ON MUNITIONS

#### PROGRESS OF BRITISH MANUFACTURE

I RISE to move the adjournment of the House in order to make a statement on the present position of munitions. It is now a little over six months since the Prime Minister invited me to take charge of the provision of munitions for the British Army in this war. Although the work is by no means complete, and some of the most important parts of it are still in course of development, I think the time has come to report progress to the House.

#### *The Relation of Munitions to the Problem of the War*

Perhaps I had better preface my statement by a short survey of the relation of munitions to the problem of the war, so that the House should understand clearly why we have taken certain action in order to increase the supply. There has never been a war in which machinery played anything like the part which it is playing in this war. The place acquired by machinery in the arts of peace in the nineteenth century has been won by machinery in the grim art of war in the twentieth century. In no war ever fought in this world has the preponderance of machinery been so completely established.

#### *Early German Superiority*

The German successes, such as they are, are entirely, or almost entirely, due to the mechanical preponderance which they achieved at the beginning of the war. Their advances in the East, West, and South are due to this mechanical superiority ; and our failure to drive them back in the West and to check their advance in the East is also attributable to the tardiness with which the Allies developed their mechanical resources. The problem of victory is one of seeing that this

superiority of the Central Powers shall be temporary, and shall be brought to an end at the earliest possible moment. There is one production in which the Allies had a complete mechanical superiority, and there they are supreme—that is in the Navy. Our command of the sea is attributable not merely to the excellence of our sailors, but to the overwhelming superiority of our machinery.

There is another aspect of this question which has become more and more evident as this war has developed and progressed.

#### *The Machine Spares the Man*

The machine is essential to defend positions of peril and it saves life, because the more machinery you have for defence, the more thinly you can hold the line, therefore, the fewer men are placed in positions of jeopardy to life and limb. We have discovered that some of the German advanced lines were held by exceptionally few men. It is a pretty well-known fact that one very strong position, held by the Germans for days and even for weeks, was defended against a very considerable French Army by ninety men, armed with about forty to fifty machine-guns, the French losing heavily in making the attack. Machinery in that case spared the men who were defending. It is one portion of the function which has been entrusted to the Ministry of Munitions to increase the supply of machines in order to save the lives of our gallant men. On the other hand, it means fewer losses in attacking positions of peril, because it demolishes machine-gun emplacements, tears up barbed wire, destroys trenches, so that, therefore, the losses are much fewer when you are attacking strong positions held by the enemy. What we stint in materials we squander in life; that is the one great lesson of munitions.

#### *Gradual extension of Department's Control*

Those are the main elements of the problem which the Prime Minister invited me to help in solving. In the Ministry of Munitions we have taken the control of supplies gradually. We have only just secured the direction of design. Woolwich Arsenal passed into our hands about three months ago. Inventions came and then went. They came and went, and came back again. Design was entrusted to us by the Prime Minister

about three weeks ago. I should, first of all, give the House the position when the Ministry of Munitions was first appointed. When I made my statement some time ago we were too uncomfortably near the day to give many particulars. It is quite impossible for us to give any sort of statement as to what is being done unless I first indicate what headway we had to make. There was undoubtedly a shortage. That was known. Our troops knew it ; so did the enemy. But neither of them knew how really short we were in some very essential particulars. Now I can with impunity give at least one or two figures. I would take gun ammunition. Gun ammunition is roughly divided into high explosive and shrapnel. There is no doubt that military opinion, at least in this country, I am not quite sure about France — was wedded to shrapnel, for reasons which are not unconnected with the events of the South African War.

#### *High Explosives Neglected*

It was supposed that the days of high explosives were numbered, except for siege guns, and that shrapnel was the only weapon for fighting in the field. The developments of this war —many of them unexpected, and many of them unexpected by the greatest soldiers—proved that that expert opinion was not altogether correct in its anticipation of the demise of high explosives. We were late and reluctant converts, and, like all reluctant converts, we were very tardy in giving up the old shrapnel. We came to the conclusion, at any rate, a very high proportion of high explosive ammunition was essential to success in the kind of trench warfare to which we had settled down. I think we still have a higher opinion of shrapnel than either the French or the Germans. It is not for me to express an opinion upon it. My business is to take orders on this point and to supply whatever the military opinion concludes is best. There is a good deal to be said on both sides. At any rate, our military experts concluded a very considerable proportion of high explosives was necessary—quite one-half. But we came rather late to that conclusion, and that accounts for the shortage in the beginning of the year and later on in April and May, and further.

*German Output of Shells*

I will now give the House an indication of the leeway I had to make up. The Germans at that time—I have already given the figures to the House—were turning out about 250,000 shells per day, the vast majority of them being high explosives. That is a prodigious figure. The French have also been highly successful in the quantity which they have been turning out. But they have great armies, and their arsenals, which were turning out the materials of war for their armies, were naturally on a larger scale than ours. Our large arsenals naturally took a naval turn, and the bulk of the engineers who were turning out munitions of war were engaged on naval work so that the month of May, when the Germans were turning out 250,000 shells a day, most of them high explosives, we were turning out 2,500 a day in high explosives and 13,000 in other shells. That was neither right in quantity nor in proportion. I have already given the House some of the reasons why the supply was so low. One was the lateness at which we came to the conclusion that high explosives were to play a great part in the war.

*The Demands of the Navy*

The other was the fact that the Navy—this is a fact which is too often forgotten, not merely in this country, but, indeed, all over the world—absorbed an enormous number of our engineers and a very high proportion of our engineering resources. I have not the figures at the present moment, but, unless I am mistaken, something between two-thirds and three-quarters of the engineers occupied on munitions were occupied in turning out material for the Navy. The Navy, since the war has been devoting itself with great energy and promptitude to creating new conditions of naval warfare which had not been anticipated. The result has been that the amount of work which they have turned out has absorbed a very large proportion of our engineering resources. No wonder there was great anxiety at the front and great anxiety at home. That was one reason why the Government came to the conclusion that it was better, perhaps, seeing that the energies of the War Office were engaged in raising armies and in feeding and supplying troops, that there should be a separate Department which could

concentrate the whole of its mind and its energies upon the production of guns and munitions, and generally the material of war.

#### *The Organization of this Department*

The first step, of course, was to create an organization for the purpose. The demand had risen so suddenly and there were so many demands from every quarter upon the energies and thoughts of the War Office that the organization had not grown in proportion to the demand, and the first step was to improvise a great business organization for the purpose of coping with this problem. We had to find a staff, and we drew it from every quarter. Some of the Government Departments lent us able Civil servants. The War Office placed at our disposal a good many soldiers and other experts. The Admiralty helped.

#### *Business Men as Officials*

But, I think, the main feature of the new organization has been that we have had placed at our disposal the services of a considerable number of business men of high standing who had been running successfully great business concerns. I think most of the branches of the Department are run by men of that type—almost all of them, though there may be one or two exceptions—men who have given their services voluntarily for the purpose. They were men who were earning great salaries—salaries such as the State has never paid to any of its public servants—and in almost every case the firms who placed their services at the disposal of the State continued those salaries. I cannot say how grateful the country ought to be for the services which these great business men have rendered. I do not think it would have been possible to improvise the organization without their assistance. We have also had experts placed at our disposal by some of the great armament firms as well as those whom the War Office lent us, and then, having divided them up into a number of Departments,

#### *Department for Discovering Weak Points*

we had a special Department whose business it was to collect and assemble every week the facts with regard to the progress made by each Department, and a weekly report is submitted

to my colleagues and myself from each Department as to the work which is going on, so that we know, if not from day to day, at any rate from week to week, where progress is made, where the work is halting, and where there are shortages which ought immediately to be made up. Then it is our business to call attention to them immediately, and see that something is done to bring every Department up to the mark. Of course, when you improvise a great organization like that, and gather your staff together hurriedly, there must be weak points. There are weak points in Departments which have lasted a good deal longer than this, and in the Ministry of Munitions there are, of course, deficiencies, which I am very glad to see my hon. friends calling attention to by questions and otherwise, and calling my attention to privately. I am always grateful to them for doing so, because it is quite impossible for any man to know everything that is going on in a great Department of that kind, unless he gets the assistance of every patriotic citizen.

#### *The Causes of Shortage*

When we got our staff together the first step was to ascertain the causes of the shortage. One reason, of course, was that the orders for high explosives had come late. Another was that perhaps they were not sufficiently spread, and then, as I indicated before, that we trusted too much to the old firms without seeking new sources of supply. The result was that deliveries bore but a percentage to the promises. I think the deliveries were at that time 16 per cent. of the promises. I am talking now of the shortage in high explosive shells. In shrapnel it was very much better. I am purely now on guns and ammunition.

That was in May [1915] before the Ministry was appointed. I am presenting the case as it appeared at the moment when we took it over. These were deliveries, not of shells, but of shell bodies, which is a very different thing.

#### *The Components of Shells*

A complete round of shell has many components. There is, first of all, the shell body—the steel case that holds the explosive. Then you have the fuse, the gauge, the cartridge case, the primer, or the tube in the case of high explosives, the high

explosive, and the propellant. Then there is the filling, which is another operation—the gauge, the fuse, the primer, the tube, the shell, and the cartridge. All these operations have to be gone through. All these components have to be assembled before you have a complete shell. I have pointed out that the delivery of shell bodies for high explosives was 15 per cent. or 16 per cent. of the promises, but the components were only a percentage of the deliveries of shell bodies. Our first duty was to see that the contracts already entered into were executed, and our second was to seek fresh sources of supply by utilizing the great engineering reserve of this country which had not been tapped up to that point.

#### *Causes of Short Deliveries*

What were the steps we took to hurry up the contractors? The first, obviously, was to discover why the deliveries were late, and why they were not fulfilling their contracts. We organized a system of weekly progress reports to be sent in by every contracting firm throughout the country. First of all, we had a column for promises, and we had next a column for deliveries, and the mere filling of these brought every week to the attention of the contractors the fact that they were not carrying out their contracts—not a bad way of getting contractors to stir up. Then we asked for the reasons why they were short, and they had to give us an explanation every week. Was it deficiency of labour, of machinery, of material, of transport, of motive power, or had they any other explanation? That is how we ascertained what the failure of the deliveries was attributable to, and then we set ourselves to assist the contractors to remove those causes. We found that what no individual contractor could do for himself, a State Department sitting in the middle was able to assist him in doing. We found that the deficiencies were largely due to lack of machinery, of labour, of the ready and steady supply of material, and sometimes to transport difficulties. The foundation of production is, obviously, the ready supply of material, the ample provision of the necessary machine tools, and of the necessary labour to manipulate both.

*Machine Tool Department*

Our first duty, therefore, was to organize a strong machine-tool department, and to place on a more systematic basis the work which had been initiated by the War Office. For this purpose we utilized the services of experts we had taken over from the War Office, and we added very considerably to their numbers and formed them into a separate Department. We had an elaborate and careful census made of all the machinery in every industrial firm in this country. We knew what the resources of this country were, especially the resources which had not been utilized up to that moment, and we found there were a very large number of lathes capable of being turned to the production of munitions. But this was not enough. There was a good deal of machinery which could not possibly be set aside for the purpose of manufacturing munitions. There was a good deal of machinery which was entirely inapplicable, and we had to look to new sources of supply for machine tools.

*The Whole Supply under State Control*

It was decided then to place the whole of the machine-tool trade of this country under Government control. It was found that not only were machines being made which were unnecessary in the interests of the country in such an emergency, but also that contractors were holding back on account of the extra expenditure involved in working night shifts and overtime, and that they were therefore not making the best use of their shops.

*Export of Machinery Restricted*

Further, by restricting the export of machinery, the Ministry was able not only to secure fresh sources of supply to meet the new increased programme, but at the same time to place machinery at the service of existing contractors who were behindhand with their deliveries. This resulted in an immediate increase in production. It was found that there was considerable congestion of machine-tool imports owing to the congestion at the ports. This difficulty was overcome by sending down promptly a resident official to expedite delivery of this machinery.

*Orders in United States*

We sent representatives to America to order new machinery, and, acting in conjunction with Messrs. J. P. Morgan & Co., they have been able to place there the necessary orders and to ensure that the machinery is of the right class. It was also discovered that a considerable amount of machinery had been collected by contractors who were unable for various reasons to utilize it. This machinery the Department was able to distribute amongst firms who were in a position to utilize it. Steps were also taken to simplify the machinery, and that led to a considerable increase of output. These are the steps we took in order to increase the machinery, which is the basis of production, and considerable improvement was effected in a very short time in that respect, and the effect upon production was almost immediate.

*Supplies of Metals*

The next step we took was in regard to raw material—metal. At the time of the formation of the Ministry, one of the chief difficulties of the contractors was the lack of a regular and sufficient supply of the necessary raw material. Under the system of competition in the open market prices of material were rising to an extent wholly unwarranted by the situation. So we formed a separate Metal Department to deal with that situation. Steps were immediately taken to place the Ministry in control of the supply of metals of all classes, and arrangements were made for providing the contractors with all the raw materials they required, and for making good any shortages by tapping fresh sources. The effect of these efforts has been to effect considerable reduction in the prices of raw materials. There has been a saving, in the aggregate, of something like £15,000,000 or £20,000,000 on the orders, due entirely to the action taken by the Metal Department of the Ministry of Munitions in securing control of the whole metal market of this country. It enabled us to ensure a supply which was adequate to meet, not only in the immediate future but for many months to come, all the demands of the various contractors, both old and new, as they are made; but also, which is equally important, to provide large supplies for our Allies. Indeed, it was only by these efforts that a crisis in the

market was prevented, and that manufacturers have been able to effect the substantial increase in the output which has actually taken place.

#### *Labour*

Another step we took was in regard to labour. As I shall deal with that separately later on I will not dwell upon that now, except to state generally that we took steps to endeavour to increase the supply, more especially of skilled workmen in the various trades. We also supplied technical advice by experts to help manufacturers to get over their difficulties which were regarding output. That was a very useful step, especially in the case of firms who had not been in the habit of turning out this class of work. We appointed a number of hustlers to visit the works and to find out what was wrong, to help to put it right and to press contracts forward. The effect in itself of calling upon the industries to supply weekly reports was to improve the output. Contractors often were not aware of their own difficulties until they were forced to face them and give them an account of them. The net result of all these steps which I have summarized has been to increase the deliveries on old orders from 16 per cent. of the promises as they were then, to over 80 per cent., a very considerable increase, of much larger promises as they are now. That is in regard to high explosives. We also effected a very considerable improvement in the percentage of the deliveries of shrapnel. The deliveries of high explosives and shrapnel have gone up much more considerably than these figures indicate. The promises were increasing from month to month and week to week, and we have succeeded in increasing very considerably the deliveries in both. That is the deliveries of shell bodies.

#### *Shell Components*

Now I come to the component parts of shells, which have given us a great deal of trouble. This is the most troublesome part of our work, because you are always finding that some component or other is falling short. You get a report that you have not enough of primers, and you concentrate your attention upon that, to bring them up to the necessary number. Then you find that another component is short, and as there are so many of them and the filling of them almost is a separate

operation, even necessitating separate buildings, it is one of the most anxious, troublesome, and baffling operations that we have got to watch. We have found that the arrangements made for shell components were on too modest a scale, and that just as in regard to shell bodies, the orders given were considerably in arrears. There was too much reliance placed on Woolwich and too little on seeking fresh sources of supply. The first steps we took in regard to this problem were similar to those as I have sketched out in regard to shell bodies. The next step was to seek out fresh firms with the capacity to undertake the manufacture of the various components ; and the third step was to erect new buildings for the purpose of supplementing private firms, and to hurry up the erection of buildings in course of construction. Our census of machinery enabled us to discover rapidly and without loss of time the new sources of supply, and the local boards of management, which I shall refer to later on, assisted very considerably. Sometimes we had to adapt components to the kind of machinery which was available, in order to increase the supply. There were two emergency factories erected for filling purposes, and completed in six weeks. I think that was a very fine piece of hustling. Large filling factories have been put up in various parts of the country in order to cope with the rapidly increasing demand, owing to the rapidly increased delivery of shells.

*Woolwich partly under the new Ministry*

Talking about components brings me to Woolwich, because Woolwich was primarily responsible for filling and assembling. The various shell bodies and components from different parts of the country were sent to Woolwich to be assembled and filled. That dual responsibility undoubtedly hindered and delayed the position of our work. Without blaming anybody, I may say that the mere fact of having dual responsibility in itself creates delay, and the War Office came to the conclusion at the end of August that it would be better to hand over that part of Woolwich to the Ministry of Munitions. I think I can give very striking figures of the effect which this has had on the solution of some of our difficulties. Sir Frederick Donaldson, the distinguished engineer, who is at the head of Woolwich, has g through America and Canada and helped us to

organize new sources of supply there, and has rendered us very great service. The engineer of the North-Eastern Railway Company (Mr. Vincent Raven) was placed at our disposal, and he is in temporary control, and the services which he has rendered there have been conspicuous. I will give one illustration. The manufacture and filling of output of various articles has increased since he took it in hand in some cases by 60 per cent., and in others by as much as 80 per cent., whereas the staff has only increased 23 per cent.

#### *Records of Output*

One of the reforms he initiated are statistical records of the output. These records were not compiled prior to his assumption of control. Now they are having, and will continue to have, a potent effect not only upon the output, but upon the cost of output. As an illustration of the use to which such figures can be put, I will mention that when the output of a certain shop or section of a shop is noted the following morning it is easy for the superintendent or the works manager to immediately put their finger upon the fact that perhaps the flow of raw material fails, or that owing to congestion of the arsenals railways the output cannot be got rid of ; and, therefore, the inefficiency can be checked. Such hitches in the daily work of a factory can only be avoided and minimized by a most complete system of statistical control, and that has been instituted at Woolwich.

I now come to the question of new sources of supply. The House may perhaps recollect that soon after I was appointed Minister of Munitions I made a special appeal to private firms hitherto not engaged in the manufacture of munitions to place their works at the disposal of the Government to enable us to increase our supply, more especially of gun ammunition.

#### *Sub-division of the Country*

The country was divided into twelve areas : England and Wales, eight ; Scotland, two ; and Ireland, two. I acknowledge the very great assistance which my hon. and learned friend the Member for Waterford [Mr. John Redmond] rendered to us in enabling us to raise supplies in Ireland, which I confess I was not very hopeful of being able to do at first—more

especially the things we stood most in need of, such as fuses, primings, and components. The works of Ireland have been extremely helpful, and I gladly acknowledge that I have been disappointed on the right side. We set up forty local munition committees in the most important engineering centres, each with a small board of management consisting of business men in that locality. The whole of Great Britain and Ireland, except districts which were barren of any engineering resources, is practically covered by the operation of these boards.

#### *Methods of Production*

There were two alternative methods of production adopted under this scheme.

##### **(a) National Shell Factories**

One was to set up national factories—national shell factories—which belonged to the Government. They were run by the local boards of management on behalf of the Government. The machinery was supplied partly by the Government and partly by borrowing from local engineering works, and a good many engineering works very patriotically assisted us with lathes, &c., at some sacrifice to themselves. These national shell factories have answered two purposes. Many of them have been conspicuously successful. They have increased our supply threefold. They have minimized our labour difficulties —there have not been the usual questions between capital and labour. They have enabled us to check prices, and I will show later the value of that when we come to consider the matter of finance.

##### **(b) Private Firms Controlled**

In addition to these national shell factories, of which we have thirty-three, we have a co-operative scheme by which we utilized the plant of private firms who, up to that time, had not been occupied in turning out any munitions of war. It is very difficult to disentangle the firms that have done nothing in the past from the firms which have, perhaps done something in a small way, but I think I am entitled to say, after some examination, that hundreds of firms which before the constitution of the Ministry of Munitions never produced any ammunition have been engaged in turning out shells and components of

shells. The services of the boards of management are purely voluntary. They are composed generally of great business men in the neighbourhood who place their services at the disposal of the State gratuitously. In each area there is a superintending engineer and his assistants, a labour officer and his assistants, a representative of the Admiralty, and generally a trench-mortar representative, and the result of this organization has been that, although those firms never turned out any ammunition at all, and for some time, no doubt, they made several mistakes—so did the national shell factories—they made starts; a shell was not what it ought to be; they had to start again; it was inevitable; it was quite new work; it was premature to criticize them; they were just finding their way to doing the work. But although they had been engaged only for two months last week they turned out three times as much high explosive shell bodies as was turned out by all the arsenals and works in the United Kingdom in the month of May last. These are private firms which have never done anything in the way of turning out shells before; but they did more than that. This is not a comparison with the 2,500 a day, because the shell bodies delivered them were more than that. The three times represents a very considerable quantity of shell bodies. They either themselves, or through firms which they helped the Ministry of Munitions to discover, turned out prodigious quantities of components to enable us to complete not merely shell bodies which they delivered, but shell bodies on order before. We owe a great deal to the patriotism of these manufacturers—they came forward so readily; they turned their works inside out; they gave up work which was highly remunerative, in order to undertake something which they knew nothing about, which they were not quite sure they could successfully manufacture, and the result of their operations has been of a most gratifying character.

#### *American Orders*

I should like just to say a word about American orders. I shall say something later on about American orders from the point of view of finance. Soon after the Ministry was appointed, Mr. Thomas, an old member of this House, went over to America to report upon the position, to let us know exactly what was

going on there, to place fresh orders, and, if possible, to accelerate orders already placed. He went there independently of agents, and I am bound to say to the House, and I am sure that the House will be glad to know it, that he comes back speaking in the highest possible terms of the services rendered to this country by Messrs. J. P. Morgan & Co., not merely for the selection of firms for the supply of munitions and the orders they have placed, but because they have saved many millions of money to this country by the efforts they have made to reduce the rather inflated prices which were prevailing before they took the matter in hand. Mr. Thomas assisted in organizing the purchase and inspection of machinery both in the United States and in Canada. He has helped very considerably in speeding up, in effecting economies, and in placing absolutely essential orders for the supply of necessary munitions for this country.

#### *Summary of Work as to Ammunition*

To sum up what has been done with regard to gun ammunition, I should say that the Ministry has endeavoured to help the contractor to obtain better deliveries of raw material, of machinery, of additional supplies of skilled labour; and technical and financial assistance has been given in a large number of cases. With regard to fresh orders, we have organized the engineering resources of this country into factories of a national character or the adaptation of factories employed on non-war production. By co-operative efforts we have done a good deal to develop colonial and foreign markets of the United States of America, Canada, France, Switzerland, and elsewhere. Every effort has been made to simplify specifications and make them understandable by inexperienced manufacturers, to simplify patterns in order to eliminate unnecessary processes, and to accelerate processes and make the best use of skilled labour, of which there is a scarcity. Attention has been given to the decentralization of inspection and the avoiding the loss of time arising from inspection generally. Woolwich has been taken over, and some progress has been made in the introduction of modern methods of inspection of material and of factories.

*Congestion at Woolwich Relieved*

The problem of relieving congestion at Woolwich has been dealt with by an elaborate system of well-distributed storage, and the railway congestion there has been decreased. What is the net result of the steps we have taken to increase the output and delivery of gun ammunition? I have given the figures for May. I cannot give the figures for November as yet. The House will be entitled later on to get them. All I can say is that the quantity of shells fired in the recent operations in September was enormous. The battle lasted for days, and almost ran into weeks, but there was no shortage. On the contrary, the Chief of the Staff assured me that they were perfectly satisfied with the quantity of shells. This was the result of four months' careful husbanding, but it will be reassuring for the House to know what the whole of it was replaced in a month, and we shall soon be in a position to replace it in a single week.

*The Question of Guns*

Now I come to the question of guns. Large orders for field guns were placed in 1914. In June deliveries were fair, although not up to promise. Medium guns and howitzers were largely in arrear, but I am glad to say that there has been a considerable improvement in the last few months, and the machinery of the Department has rendered most valuable assistance in this respect. In regard to these guns the House may take it that the position is thoroughly satisfactory. Now I come to the more important problem of the heavy guns. I experienced some difficulty in speaking about it last time, because whatever you may say about it must to some extent advertise your resources to the enemy. Before I made any statement to the House I consulted the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister thought that it was well to endeavour to let not only this country know, but our Allies know, that we were putting forward very great exertions to equip our Forces with the heaviest possible artillery. I am of opinion that the decision that the Prime Minister gave was a right one. There are certain things you cannot hide from the enemy. It is a great mistake to assume that they do not know. After all, they know what shells you have, what size of shell you have,

how much heavy and how much light, exactly as we know about theirs. These things are not produced merely for the delectation of our soldiers. They are used in order to send them across to the enemy, and the enemy knows that the moment you have got them they will be passed on, and if they are not passed on the enemy comes to the conclusion, not at all unnaturally, that you have not got them. On the other hand, your Allies want to know that you are putting forward all your strength; it encourages them, and therefore the Prime Minister came to the conclusion that it was better that the facts should be divulged.

#### *The Big Gun adopted late*

Up to midsummer of this year, big guns on a large scale had not been ordered. We came rather late to the conclusion that on a large scale big guns were essential to the successful prosecution of the war. I am not surprised. The House will recollect the kind of gun which was regarded as a prodigy in the Boer War; it was just a poor, miserable, medium gun. Now the soldiers are doubtful whether it counts in the least in trench warfare. Some one told me that in that very interesting novel about the invasion of this country by the Germans, which was published about three or four years ago, the big gun which was to terrify everybody, as described in that novel, was 4·7. That is nothing compared with requirements now. The heavy siege gun which we had at the beginning of the war is now the lightest, not only because there has been such a change in the ideas of the military, but because the facts have forced the conclusion on us that it is only the very heaviest guns that will enable us to demolish these trenches. The trenches are getting deeper and deeper still; there is trench behind trench, trenches of every conceivable angle, labyrinths of trenches, with concrete easements, and nothing but the most powerful and shattering artillery will enable our men to advance against them, except along a road which is the road to certain death.

#### *Building the Heaviest Possible Guns*

Therefore the War Office came to the conclusion that it was essential to success and victory, and essential to the protection

of the lives of our soldiers, that we should have an adequate equipment of the heaviest possible artillery. We are erecting great works in this country, and I have no doubt some hon. members have seen some of them. They are mostly associated with the programme for the production of these guns and the supply of adequate projectiles. I am very glad to say that we are making rapid progress with these structures. We have placed at our disposal the services of one of the ablest contractors in this country ; I think he is manager to Sir William Arrol's firm. He came to our assistance, gave up his work, and voluntarily and gratuitously placed his services at the disposal of the Ministry of Munitions to help in pressing forward the construction of these works. The help which he has given us is of a very conspicuous character. That is all I can say under that head.

#### *Machine Guns*

I come now to the equally important question of machine guns. The dimensions of the machine-gun problem will be realized if the House will consider not only the increase of the size of the Army, but also that the number of guns per division has increased many-fold. When the war began our ideas were that each battalion should be supplied with two machine guns. The Germans supply each with sixteen machine guns. There is no doubt that the machine gun is by far the most destructive weapon in the whole of their army ; it has destroyed far more lives than their rifles. In fact, I was told the other day that the machine guns and artillery between them are probably responsible for more than 90 per cent. of the casualties, rifles being responsible for not much more than 5 per cent. We were rather late in realizing the great part which the machine gun played in this war, and I think I am entitled to say that the first time that the importance of the problem was impressed upon me was by the Prime Minister after his first visit to the Front in June.

When my right hon. friend returned from the front, he impressed upon me, in the gravest possible language, the importance of supplying on a very large scale machine guns ; and one of the first steps was to make arrangements for multiplying many-fold, and as quickly as possible, our output of machine guns. We immediately placed large orders at home

and abroad. But we have taken steps, so far as the home orders were concerned, to see that they were executed ; therefore we assisted firms with machinery, labour, and material. We completely equipped a new large factory for the manufacture of the Vickers gun, and all the machine tools and equipment have been delivered, but production is delayed for want of skilled labour. In another part of the country an existing machine gun factory has been extended in order to increase its output of machine guns. This has been done, substantially, for weeks while a new factory to produce a similar amount has been built and equipped in the same district. Two new factories have been erected elsewhere to turn out other types of machine guns. There is one type which is best for defence, another type infinitely better for attack, and another which is best of all for aeroplanes. Therefore we have to turn out various kinds of machine guns. At two other works extension of plant has been made for the production of machine-gun plant in order to increase machine-gun production.

#### *Production Increased Fivefold*

The net result since we began these operations has been to increase the production fivefold ; we turn out five times the number we were turning out at that date. In the New Year there will be a production greater still, and, in short, our requirements are well in sight of being fulfilled.

#### *Rifles*

With regard to rifles, we have taken steps similar to those taken with regard to shells and machine guns. The plant has been extended at home, and large and important orders have been given to America. There is one feature which is worth mentioning. We have peddled out a large amount of work to certain firms ; they have not turned out rifles, but some have made certain component parts, while other firms turn out other parts of the rifle. We peddle out these parts to a great many firms, and we propose to have them assembled under the supervision of some expert firm like Enfield, and by that means obtain a considerable increase in the possibilities of output.

#### *Trench Mortars*

I come now to the trench mortar. This is almost a new development, and yet, although it's a new development, there

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is no part of this war where the soldiers have resorted more to old methods—entapists, spring guns, and, of course, grenades, and the helmet. All that I can say about this is that since we undertook this task the grenade output has increased by forty times—and this is an output entirely new to the trade. There has been a school established for instruction in connexion with this work. The output of trench mortars has greatly increased. The present output in a fortnight is equal to the whole output in the first year of trench mortars; at any rate, if the increase in regard to mortars which we turn out now is taken, I think the House will regard that as satisfactory. There are other developments in this respect which I dare not mention. There has been valuable experimental work of a kind which I had better not discuss.

#### *Optical Glass*

There are several branches of work which I might have dwelt upon; for instance, the output of optical munitions; but we were so dependent on Germany for optical glass that when the war broke out there was an acute famine in this country. Orders have been placed wherever possible abroad. Germany here was predominant. Steps have been taken to extend largely the operations of the few firms in this country. With regard to explosives I have already told the House of the steps which we have taken, and of the important new works which have been constructed in different parts of the country, so that I feel confident that while the output of shells and munitions becomes very considerable, the amount of high explosives and propellants to fill them will be quite adequate. Not only that, but I think we shall be able to supply, as we are supplying, very considerable quantities, especially of high explosives, to our Allies who are in need of them. During the last three weeks there has been an addition to the powers of the Ministry. Hitherto, whilst manufacture was in our hands, design was in the hands of the War Office.

#### *Design placed under the Ministry*

The fact that you separated the design from the manufacture necessarily caused delay, and there had been a good deal of unnecessary delay, for which I blame no one except the system by which you separated the control and the direction of the

two branches. In France the manufacture and the design were under the same control. My right hon. friend the Prime Minister was in charge at the War Office when I put the whole case before him, and he took the view that it was infinitely better in the interests of increasing output that the Minister of Munitions should be responsible for both, and the effect of that has been that the Ordnance Board and the Royal Laboratory at Woolwich have been transferred to the Ministry of Munitions. We are able now to co-ordinate design with manufacture. We have made very important changes in the Ordnance Board. We have placed at the head of this new Department one of the most distinguished artillery officers in the British Army, and one who had experience for about fifteen months in directing artillery in France. He has had the assistance of two or three others, who also had experience at the Front, and that in itself is a great advantage when you want to manufacture the right design to have the actual experience of men who have been directing operations at the Front.

#### *The Question of Economy*

I come now to a consideration, the last, and which perhaps some hon. members will think was the last consideration in my mind. I mean economy, and I should like to deal with that before I come to labour. I should like to tell my hon. friends below the Gangway why I put economy first and labour second, and why I am putting them so near together. The Ministry took over from the War Office certain members of its financial staff, and during the first few weeks, and I think months, of our administration we had the advantage of the services of Sir Charles Harris, who is one of the ablest men in the Civil Service. The work was too great for him, and we had to make other arrangements. Even before the Government examined the problem of supervision of the expenditure of the great spending departments, we had created a special organization for the purpose of revising prices and costs. There was a very able accountant, Mr. Lever, a member of one of the most important firms in this country, who placed his services gratuitously at our disposal. We set him to the task of scrutinizing contracts and examining prices and generally seeking out methods of cutting down and keeping down expenditure.

He gathered around him a staff of experienced business men and accountants. He first of all devoted his attention to the question of gun ammunition, because that is the largest item of expenditure—incomparably the largest item of expenditure. The prices were fixed for gun ammunition when the need was very urgent. There was no time to bargain, and that is true both of the War Office and of the Ministry of Munitions. New firms were also taken on, but at first the actual cost of production of unaccustomed and inexperienced firms is very considerably higher than that of experienced firms, so that for one reason or another prices were high.

#### *The Cost of Production*

The committee have examined very carefully the cost of production, and, as I pointed out earlier in the course of my statement, the national shell factories helped us there, because we discovered, and we knew from our experience in the national shell factories, what the actual cost of production was in every operation. This new committee came to the conclusion that prices could be considerably reduced. A new scale has been devised, but, of course, it is only applicable to new contracts and to renewal of old contracts. Therefore it has not yet come to full fruition, but I will just give the House an indication of the saving which will be effected by this means. The cost of the ammunition for 18-pounders, which is a very considerable item, running into millions, has been reduced by 40 per cent., and the cost of the ammunition for 4·5 howitzers has been reduced by 30 per cent. since the report of this committee, and all the new contracts are based on those prices. I have been speaking as regards the complete shell. I am speaking of the gun ammunition, which is the most important item of expenditure. The gun is a comparatively small matter compared with the ammunition, and there is no item of expenditure which compares with the expenditure on shells. Therefore Mr. Lever's committee devoted its energies to examining the cost of shells, and that committee is still going on. They took first of all the lighter guns, because that is a considerable item at present, but they are proceeding to examine the heavy ammunition, and they are going on to examine the whole of the items of expenditure in the Ministry of Munitions.

*The Saving*

By this means we hope we will save, and save very considerably—save in millions, in tens of millions—upon the expenditure which we are incurring. Here I should like to make an appeal to the local committees. Contracts are being placed very largely through these local munitions committees. At first it was always necessary to let contracts at fairly high prices, because there were unaccustomed firms coming in, and they would not make much out of it, although the prices were high. But now the time is coming when the local boards of management should assist us in placing all the new contracts and all the renewals upon the new scale. As we have had a good deal of decentralization in the letting of our contracts a good deal of responsibility necessarily falls upon those committees, and we must have their co-operation in achieving this very important result in the interests of national economy. When we regard the prodigious cost of the war every million saved is of vital importance, not merely for the future, but actually in order to conserve our energies for the carrying on of the war itself.

*Control of Metal Market*

I have already pointed out the economy which has been effected in taking control of the metal market. We have got to examine the prices in this country, compared with the prices of similar metals in America and elsewhere, to find how substantial those economies are. We have saved in the course of a single year something which is equal to 6d. or 7d. in the £ of income tax in the metal market alone. There is another method of saving—and here I am coming very near to labour—by altering the proportion of home and foreign orders. When the Ministry was formed the proportion of foreign orders in the most expensive items, like gun ammunition and rifles, was two foreign for one home. What does that mean? The more foreign orders you have the greater your exchange difficulty, and the prices are always higher, even in times of peace, in America than they are here. You have no control over the industries there, and therefore you cannot prevent inflation of prices, except by competition. But when every available firm is working hard to produce for you there is practically no com-

petition, but the moment you reduce your orders there you are in a position to dictate terms with regard to prices. The next consideration is the desirability of leaving the American market as much as you possibly can to the equipping of those Allies who have not the same industrial and engineering resources as we have. Therefore, from every point of view, it is vital that you should do everything to increase the proportion which we manufacture here in comparison with what we order from abroad. There are other reasons as well.

#### *Aim to develop Home Supplies*

Our aim ought to be to develop the home resources, and we have already effected a very substantial change in the proportion of the orders, especially in the more expensive articles, but the success of this essential object depends entirely upon labour—entirely, and I come to that now. We want labour to man the old factories. There are machines now standing idle—machines of the most modern type for the manufacture of machine guns for which our armies, and the armies of our Allies, are clamouring, and which are essential for offence and for defence. We cannot put them out because we have not the necessary skilled labour. There are some things for which you must get skilled men. There are other operations for which you really do not need skilled men. That is the whole problem. If you can get the skilled man from the place where the unskilled man or woman can do the work just as well, and put him into the factory where you must have a skilled man, the problem of the war will be solved.

#### *The New Factories and their Requirements*

So much for the old factories. What about the new factories? We require for these new factories 80,000 skilled men, and from 200,000 to 300,000 unskilled men and women. Upon our getting them depends, as I think, our success in the war. But take the lowest view of it. Upon that depends entirely whether we are going to alter substantially the proportion of orders in favour of this country, and consequently reduce the cost of the war by tens and scores of millions of pounds in the course of a single year. It depends upon that whether we can furnish our armies with guns, the right sort of guns, plenty of the right

sort of guns, rifles, machine guns, projectiles, to enable them to make next year's campaign a success. I should like to dwell a little more upon two considerations, because they are of overwhelming importance.

*Not overdoing it*

I have heard rumours that we are overdoing it, over-ordering, over-building, over-producing. Nothing could be more malevolent or more mischievous. You can talk about over-ordering when we have as much as the Germans have, and even then I should like to argue how far we have to go. So mischievous is that kind of talk that I cannot help thinking that it must have been originated by men of pro-German sympathies, who know how important it is that our troops should, at the critical moment, be short of that overwhelming mass of material which alone can break down the resistance of a highly entrenched foe. In spite of our great efforts, we have not yet approached the German and French production. We have got to reach that first and not last. France is of opinion that even her colossal efforts are inadequate. I have consulted generals and officers of experience in the British and French armies. The conferences which I have had with the Minister of Munitions in France have given me full opportunity of obtaining the views of the most highly placed and distinguished officers in the French Army. Before I quote their opinions, let me point out that all these generals up to the present have invariably underestimated the quantity of materials necessary to secure victory. I am not surprised. It is so prodigious. I remember a great French general—one of the greatest—saying to me that it was one of the surprises of the war. He had studied tactics with the highest authorities, and he says that that is the great surprise of the war. Every battle that has been fought has demonstrated one thing : that even now it is an under-estimate and not an over-estimate. Take the last great battle—that of Loos. You had a prodigious accumulation of ammunition. There is not a general who was in the battle who in giving his report does not tell you that with three times the quantity of ammunition, especially in the heavier natures, they would have achieved twenty times the result.

*Dangers of Inadequate Supply*

It is too early to talk about over production. The most fatuous way of economizing is to produce an inadequate supply. A good margin is but a sensible insurance. Less than enough is a foolish piece of extravagance. £200,000,000 will produce an enormous quantity of ammunition. It is forty days' cost of the war. If you have it at the crucial moment your war might be won in forty days. If you have not got it it might run to four hundred days. What sort of economy is that? But it is not merely that. It is this—and this is a fact which I mean to repeat in every speech that I make on the question: What you spare in money you spill in blood. I have a very remarkable photograph—I do not think I ought to say where I got it—of the battle-field of Loos, taken immediately after the battle. There was barbed wire which had not been destroyed. There was one machine-gun emplacement intact—only one. The others had been destroyed. There, in front of the barbed wire, lay hundreds of gallant men. There was one machine gun—one. These are the accidents you can obviate. How? Every soldier tells me there is but one way of doing it. You must have enough ammunition to crash in every trench wherein the enemy lurks, to destroy every concrete emplacement, to shatter every machine gun, to rend and tear every yard of barbed wire, so that if the enemy want to resist they will have to do it in the open, face to face with better men than themselves. That is the secret—plenty of ammunition. I hope that this idea that we are turning out too much will not enter into the mind of workman, capitalist, taxpayer, or any body until we have enough to crash our way through to victory. You must spend wisely; you must spend to the best purpose; you must not pay extravagant prices; but, for Heaven's sake, if there are risks to be taken, let them be risks for the pocket of the taxpayer, and not for the lives of the soldiers!

*Economize in Cost not in Output*

The right path of economy is therefore not to reduce the output, but to reduce the cost, and labour alone can help us here. There are only 8 per cent. of the machines for turning out lathes in this country working on night shifts. [An hon. member: Why?] I am coming to the reason why. We

have appealed to the employers. They say, 'We cannot get the labour.' It is true. They have not got the skilled labour. But there are many of these operations which could—I will not say just as effectively, but effectively enough—be discharged by unskilled men and women. We have done everything we could to supply skilled labour. We have done our best to increase the efficiency of labour. We have had a most able committee, under the chairmanship of Sir George Newman, trying to increase the efficiency of labour by seeing that the men and women get good conditions for working.

#### *Conditions of Labour*

The abolition of Sunday labour has been recommended. There are committees on fatigue. There are questions of health welfare. There are questions of canteens. All these questions are being gone into with a view to improving the strength of the men, enabling them to endure and to do better work while they are at it. We have done our best by means of a great system of munition volunteers to fill up the gaps. It is no use going into the question why we did not get more than 5,000 or 6,000. We are trying to get men from the Colours, but it is a great rearguard action. It is like getting through barbed-wire entanglements without heavy guns. There are entrenchments behind entrenchments. You have not merely the Army, the corps, the division, the brigade, the battalion, and the company, but the platoon, and even the squad—everybody fighting to prevent men from coming away. I am not surprised. I am not blaming them. Skilled men at any trade are skilled men at every trade. Your intelligent skilled man is a good man in the trenches, and nobody wants to lose him. Therefore every corporal fights against parting with a good, intelligent, skilled workman. As my hon. friend points out, the men themselves feel that they are running away from danger in order to go back to comfort and high wages and emoluments, and they do not like it. It is a very creditable story. At last I think we are beginning to get over these difficulties, largely through the pertinacity and tact of Major Scott. Let me again acknowledge the very great assistance we have got from hon. members of this House. Hon. members have assisted very materially, not merely by what

they did, but by their very presence. They have no idea how much that counts. The fact that it was known that hon. members had taken particular interest in the matter and were helping, enabled us to get the men. We have got a very considerable number, but nothing like what we want.

### *The Organization of Labour*

It all depends upon organized labour. Unless they allow us to place unskilled men and women at work which hitherto perhaps has been the monopoly of skilled men, in order that we may take the highly skilled men away and put them into other work, we cannot do what we want. You may ask why it has not been done? I will tell the House why. It is far better that the House should be told quite frankly. The leaders of the trade unions made an agreement, but we found exactly the same difficulties as we found in the release of men from the Colours. If you go down, down, down, there is an action to be fought in every area, every district, every town, every workshop, every lodge—they all fight against it. The weakness is this: our bargain was that we should restrict the profits of the employer. To a certain extent the fact that we have kept our bargain has been against us. Why? A few employers have done their very best to what we call dilute the labour, and they have been met with unquestionable resistance. It has taken us weeks to overcome this resistance. The rest of the employers know this, and say, 'At any rate, we have no personal interest in the matter. If we increase the output by means of night shifts it does not increase our profits.' The personal interest has been completely eliminated, and when men are working hard superintending their work, and anxious enough work, and suffering from overstrain, they really do not feel like embarking in a conflict with their own men in order to increase the output which so far as their works are concerned makes no difference.

### *The Appeal to Patriotism*

There is only one appeal to employer and employed: it is the appeal to patriotism! The employer must take steps. He is loath to do it. It is a sort of inertia which comes to tired and overstrained men—as they all are. They must really face the

local trade unions, and put forward the demand, because until they do so the State cannot come in. We have had an Act of Parliament, but the law must be put into operation by somebody. Unless the employer begins by putting on the lathes unskilled men and women we cannot enforce that Act of Parliament. The first step, therefore, is that the employer must challenge a decision upon the matter. He is not doing so because of the trouble which a few other firms have had. Let us do it. Victory depends upon it ! Hundreds of thousands of precious lives depend upon it. It is a question of whether you are going to bring this war victoriously to an end in a year, or whether it is going to linger on in bloodstained paths for years. Labour has got the answer. The contract was entered into with labour. We are carrying it out. It can be done.

#### *The Danger of 'Too Late'*

I wonder whether it will not be too late ? Ah ! two fatal words of this war ! Too late in moving here. Too late in arriving there. Too late in coming to this decision. Too late in starting with enterprises. Too late in preparing. In this war the footsteps of the Allied forces have been dogged by the mocking spectre of 'Too Late' ; and unless we quicken our movements damnation will fall on the sacred cause for which so much gallant blood has flowed. I beg employers and workmen not to have 'Too Late' inscribed upon the portals of their workshops : that is my appeal.

Everything in the next few months of this war depends upon it. What has happened ? We have had the co-operation of our Allies. Great results have been arrived at. At the last conference of the Allies decisions were arrived at which will affect the whole conduct of the war. The carrying of them out depends upon the workmen of this country. The superficial facts of the war are for the moment against us.

#### *Favourable Auspices*

All the fundamental facts are in our favour. That means we have every reason for looking the facts steadily in the face. There is nothing but encouragement in them if we look beneath the surface. The chances of victory are still with us. We have thrown away many chances. But for the most part

the best still remains. In this war the elements that make for success in a short war were with our enemies. All the advantages that make for victory in a long war were ours, and are still! Better preparation before the war, interior lines, unity of command—those belonged to the enemy. More than that, undoubtedly he has shown greater readiness than we to learn the lessons of the war and to adapt himself to them. He had a better conception at first of what war really meant. Heavy guns, machine guns, trench warfare—that was his study! Our study was the sea. We have accomplished our task there to the last letter of the promise. The advantages of a protracted war are ours. We have an overwhelming superiority in the raw material of war. It is still with us in spite of the fact that the Central Powers have by their successes increased their reserve of men and material. The overwhelming superiority is still with us. We have the command of the sea that gives us ready access to neutral countries. Above all—and this tells in a long war—we have the better cause. It is better for the heart. Nations do not endure to the end for a bad cause. All these advantages are ours. But this is the moment of intense preparation.

#### *Energy and Resolution Essential*

It is the moment of putting the whole of our energies at home into preparing for the blow to be struck abroad. Our Fleet and the gallantry of the troops of the Allies have given us time to muster our reserves. Let us utilize that time without the loss of a moment. Let us cast aside the fond illusion that you can win victory by an elaborate pretence that you are doing so. Let us fling to one side rivalries, trade jealousies, professional, political—everything. Let us be one people! One in aim, one in action, one in resolution to win the most sacred cause ever entrusted to a great nation.

## AMERICA AND THE ALLIES

THE Pilgrims entertained the Hon. JAMES M. BECK at the Savoy Hotel, on Wednesday, July 5, 1916, to a luncheon, at which Viscount Bryce presided, and proposed the health of their guest.

### MR. BECK'S SPEECH

Let me say in the first place to Lord Bryce that I shall carry back the message with which he has done me the honour to entrust to me, and it will receive a very ready response among the thoughtful people of my country, for I am persuaded that the best thought of America is that it would be a world-wide calamity if this war did not end with a conclusive victory for the principles so nobly defended by the Allies. I will also carry back the possibly unnecessary message that this war is not going to be a draw. I was in this country in the first month of the war, and then England reminded me of a great St. Bernard dog which, in a spirit of *noblesse oblige*, complacently wagged its tail when attacked by a powerful adversary. To-day England seems to me like a bull-dog with the business end of his jaws firmly set in his assailant's throat.

Let me further say, by way of introduction, that I also take with a great deal of hesitation the magnificent compliment which the author of *The American Commonwealth* has been pleased to pay me. I know full well that in the generous appreciation which you have shown me, and which he has confirmed by his gracious reference to the little I have done, that you have greatly exaggerated any service that I was privileged to render, and yet I shall not blunt the fine edge of the compliment by too vigorous a disclaimer. You know that Lord Bryce's name in my country carries immense weight, possibly more so than any other publicist of any nation. When Lord Bryce speaks, whether in printed page or oral speech, we are accustomed to accept it as almost *ex cathedra*, and I therefore feel, in view of what he has said about my little contribution to the controversial history of the war, very much as

Dr. Johnson did when he visited King George III and His Majesty was pleased to make some very complimentary remarks about the Fleet Street philosopher's dictionary. When Dr. Johnson returned to the ever-faithful Boswell, and told him with natural gratification what His Majesty had said, Boswell said : ' What did you say when the King praised your dictionary ? ' Dr. Johnson replied : ' Am I a man to bandy words with my Sovereign ? If His Majesty says that my dictionary is the best in the English language, it must be so.' Similarly I shall accept, not because I believe it, or without great misgivings, Lord Bryce's gracious introduction and the generous references which he has made to the ' Evidence in the Case '.

#### *A Message of Goodwill*

I have come here to bring a message of goodwill from the American Pilgrims, and because you are all busy men I wish to speak as briefly and rapidly as possible. I have not any prepared speech. This is not the time for didactic essays or ornate orations. In these dreadful days - to use the fine phrase of Tom Paine, ' the times that try men's souls ' - the only thing that is valuable in speech is sincerity, and it is in that spirit I want to speak to you about the only topic of which you may wish to hear me : namely, the relations of the United States to this war and to the Allies.

There is one obvious limitation upon any discussion of the subject at my hands. Whatever may be my views at home, I cannot discuss the political policies of the party of the day in the United States. I have very strong convictions with respect to many of these policies, and I have not hesitated to express them with great freedom to audiences of my own countrymen; but if I shall ever be tempted to criticize in a public gathering in a foreign land either the President of the United States or the Government of the day, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth !

Be the acts of a political Government what they may, the vital importance for the great future is what has been the spirit of the people, because in the long run that is more significant than the temporary policy of any party of the day. I have only gratifying news to bring to this distinguished audience as to the attitude of our people.

I was in England, as I have said, in the first month of the war. I remember with what interest, perhaps I might almost say solicitude, thoughtful Englishmen asked, when the war came as a bolt out of the blue, what will be the verdict on America? It was not merely the sentimental side of that verdict which interested you, although I think some of you attached great importance to what your kinsmen across the Atlantic would say as to the ethical aspects of the great controversy. But there were obvious practical aspects with respect to your great Empire which made the question of some importance. It was important to know how America would view a great world-crisis, as to which all its past political traditions gave it no preliminary prepossessions.

#### *America's Sympathy with the Allies*

The verdict that came to you across the Atlantic was spontaneous and overwhelming. We have in our history viewed with varied feelings and a lack of clearly preponderating views the previous wars of Europe in the nineteenth century, as we considered them in their ethical and practical aspects. But in this case the overwhelming sentiment of the people, whether expressed by press or pulpit, by university or college, by bankers, merchants, or the masses toiling in the factories and the fields, was overwhelmingly in favour of the Allies. Excluding one or two elements of our population, which by reason of ties of blood to some extent ran counter to that general opinion, the preponderating judgement of the American people was then, and after eighteen months remains to-day, without diminution or shadow of turning, heart and soul with the Allies.

While that verdict needs no further statement, for it is a commonplace of our current political history, yet it has certain features which may not have received full recognition in this country.

In the first place, it was a *dispassionate* verdict. I mean by that it was little affected by racial kinship. I believe that the American people, if they had thought that England was in the wrong in unsheathing its sword on behalf of Belgium, or in entering upon this great world-quarrel, would have reached that conclusion uninfluenced by racial kinship or the ties of

blood. The verdict was as clearly dispassionate as one could expect in a verdict of human beings.

In the second place it was not an *academic* verdict, reached after coffee at the breakfast-table and forgotten before the shadows of evening fell. It was a verdict rendered after the greatest intellectual controversy that my country ever knew. For eighteen months its people day and night discussed this question; it was a commonplace of conversation to say that whenever a group of intelligent men and women were gathered together all subjects inevitably led to the war. Moreover, Germany, appreciating the value of the American verdict, did not hesitate to appoint its *advocatus diaboli* in the person of Dr. Dernburg, who, financed by millions, and aided by thousands of German volunteers, attempted at every cross-road and in the centres of our cities, to reverse that verdict by a very torrent of controversial argument and by appeals to every idea or emotion which they thought might impress the American. They appealed to our supposed cupidity, our fears, our prejudices, our interests, to every consideration which might affect the spontaneous verdict that was first pronounced. Yet they were finally obliged to admit that this judgement of the American people was a settled, matured, deliberate, and irrevocable judgement—in no respects academic, but such a judgement as a court of law would pronounce upon a consideration of all the facts.

Again, this verdict was a *militant* verdict. I mean that the American people did not in a spirit of moral dilettantism simply express an opinion about this war, and then resume their normal activities. To an extent far greater than perhaps some of you appreciate, American men, women, and children have been for eighteen months working in their several capacities, either to alleviate the sufferings of the war or to stem the German propaganda, by building up a strong militant public opinion for the Allies. So that if the war is a war primarily of ideas and ideals, we have been participants to some extent, and our part has not been only that of a cold, callous, selfish outsider, as some have thought.

Finally, this verdict was in a sense a *disinterested* verdict, by which I mean that it was little affected by our own interests. We did not ask whether it was to our interests that this or that

group of nations should triumph. Indeed, our sense of detachment made it seem to us that neither the fate of Belgium nor of Serbia affected us directly in a purely practical sense, and it was therefore the ethical aspects of the issue which powerfully appealed to our emotions and made us willing and enthusiastic adherents of the Allies' cause.

You will however ask, that if the verdict was thus overwhelming, why did it not find a greater reflex in the action of the Government as a political entity. I have said that I cannot discuss the political policies of the party of the day of my country. While I am not of that party, still it speaks for my country, and while I reserve the right to criticize it in my own country, yet with me and every true American politics stop at the margin of the ocean, and therefore I cannot criticize the present Administration in Washington in another country. But I can give you the reason why in the very nature of things the United States as a political entity could not take any other part than that of neutrality in this world-crisis.

#### *Why the United States remained Neutral*

England and the United States are both conservative nations, certainly the two most conservative democracies of the world. We love settled institutions. We cling to the old : we dread the new. We believe that that which has in the past been tried, has a violent presumption in its favour. Never was a nation more dominated by a tradition than our nation was by the tradition of its political isolation. It has its roots in the very beginnings of the American commonwealth. In nine generations no political party and few public men have ever questioned its continued efficacy. The pioneers, who came in 1620 across the Atlantic to Plymouth Rock and founded the American Commonwealth, desired, like the intrepid Kent in *King Lear*, to 'shape their old course in a country new', so that the spirit of detachment from Europe was implanted in the very souls of the pioneers who conquered the virgin forests of America. Our colonial history was a constant struggle between this spirit of detachment on the part of the pioneers and the centralizing demands of the Mother Country. Our revolt was not merely about a 2d. stamp on tea. We proclaimed independence from the same instinct of separation and detach-

ment. When Washington in the Napoleonic wars proclaimed a policy of neutrality, he again expressed the instinctive feeling of his countrymen that America should not be the shuttlecock of European polities. We had had long experience of this. As Macaulay said, the rape of Silesia had made the whites and Indians fight upon the shores of the Hudson and the Great Lakes.

When Washington gave in his great Farewell Address his last testament to his countrymen, he defined the foreign policy of the United States better than it has been defined before or since. He said that Europe has a 'set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation', and therefore he advised that we should not by '*artificial ties* implicate ourselves in the *ordinary* vicissitudes of her politics or the *ordinary* combinations and collisions of her friendships and enmities.'

My countrymen for many generations have accepted this counsel of our Founder as infallible, but they have not always appreciated the weight that Washington meant to give to the expression '*artificial ties*', and '*ordinary vicissitudes and ordinary enmities*'. Washington recognized that there might, as is now the case, be an *extraordinary* vicissitude in which a conflict, while originating primarily on the Continent of Europe, and primarily affecting its internal polities, might yet affect the very bases of civilization, and impose upon the United States, as upon every civilized nation, the fullest responsibility to aid in maintaining the peace of the world by establishing international justice. By '*artificial ties*' Washington meant, I think, hard-and-fast alliances of an entangling nature. He did not intend to ignore the natural ties which spring from racial kinship or common ideals.

#### *The Effect of the Monroe Doctrine*

The Monroe doctrine illustrates the same policy of isolation, for it was founded upon a disclaimer of any interest by the United States 'in the internal affairs of Europe'.

I appeal to you, men of England—as many of you stand high in the public life of this country of settled traditions—if a tradition had existed in England for three centuries, and had persisted among nine generations of men who, although they differed upon every other question, yet never differed with respect to

such policy—could you reasonably expect that in a day or a week or a year that England, even in a great crisis of humanity, would throw aside a great settled tradition, the value and justice of which all its political parties had accepted for three centuries ? If such a policy had had in successive generations the unquestioning support of the elder and the younger Pitt, of Fox, Camden, Burke, Sheridan, of Peel, Palmerston and Russell, of Gladstone, Disraeli and Salisbury, of Balfour, Bonar Law, Asquith, and Sir Edward Grey, and then a quarrel arose in another country three thousand miles away, would England in a day, or a month, or a year have disregarded a tradition of such exceptional authority ? And, *mutatis mutandis*, that was the position of the United States on August 1, 1914.

Were this all, the attitude of the United States as a political entity would be easily understood. But we have another tradition, which in this crisis has conflicted with our tradition of isolation. In every true American soul in the last eighteen months there has been a conflict of ideals. One was this ideal of detachment from European politics and our isolation ; the other was the ideal which we derived from the French Revolution : namely, the spirit of cosmopolitanism, which taught us that humanity was greater than any nation ; that the interests of civilization were above those of any country ; that above all there was a conscience of mankind, by which the actions of any nation must be judged.

#### *The United States and the Rape of Belgium*

When, therefore, the rape of Belgium affronted our conscience, the question inevitably arose, ' Shall we abandon the great tradition of political isolation under which we have grown great, or shall we fail by inaction to do a duty, where the spirit of international justice imperiously calls upon us and every nation to play its part ? '

The practical genius of our people tried to solve the problem as best it could in so short a time, and our Government was permitted by public opinion to follow an official policy of benevolent neutrality to the Allies, while the people of the United States, as individuals and collectively, were permitted to ignore the policy of neutrality by helping the Allies in every

practicable way in their noble struggle for the best interests of civilization.

I believe that this war, among many other surpassing benefits, will bring nearer to realization than ever before a sympathetic understanding between Great Britain and the United States. We appreciate the greatness of your Empire more than we, I think, appreciated it before. Our views in the past have been somewhat affected by our earlier history, and to a greater extent than you may imagine by the Napoleonic wars, because every American boy, at least in the exuberance of youthful imagination, ranks the great Napoleon as his hero next to Washington. This has always affected the attitude with which the American in the past has viewed the policies of your Empire. But now we have seen your Empire rise, in this great crisis of civilization, to defend the rights of a little nation, and reveal itself—to use Milton's noble imagery—as 'a noble and puissant nation, rousing itself like a strong man after his sleep and shaking its invincible locks'.

#### *America's Appreciation of the British Effort*

With deep admiration we have seen Great Britain follow the noblest policy in all its long and glorious history in staking its whole existence to save Belgium and aid France. The immortal valour of Tommy Atkins has also powerfully impressed us. We saw you, within three days, send that little army—little in this war—of over one hundred thousand men across the Channel, and offer them as a sacrifice to save your great and heroic neighbour on the south of the English Channel. We saw the thin red line at Ypres, suffocated by gases, rained upon by shrapnel, opposed by forces fourfold greater than their own, and yet standing like a stone wall against the red tide of Prussian invasion. We saw Tommy Atkins realizing that song that I heard in London twenty years ago :

To keep the flag a-flying,  
He 's a doing and a-dying  
*Every inch of him a soldier, and a man.*

That has been the great benefit of the war to us, that it has brought us into a profound understanding and sympathetic appreciation of your great Empire. If I were asked to say who was *unwittingly* the most beneficent statesman of modern

times, I should undoubtedly say the Kaiser, for he has consolidated the British Empire, reinvigorated France, reorganized Russia, and has brought the United States and Great Britain nearer to a realization of that complete sympathetic understanding, upon which an *Entente Cordiale* may ultimately rest, than any other individual in the world.

An *Entente Cordiale* must rest not merely upon a sympathetic understanding, but, as long as men are human, to some extent upon common interests. We are entering upon the most portentous half-century the world has ever seen. You will end this war, and you may end it speedily or within six months, or a year, two years. But what lies beyond? Over ravaged homes, desolated fields, and new-made graves, men will gaze at each other for possibly fifty years with irreconcilable hatred. This world will be a seething cauldron of international hatred, in my judgement, for half a century.

#### *The Interdependence of the Two Branches of our Race*

In this portentous and critical time to come, the United States will need you, and England will need the United States.

May this possible interdependence in vital interests lead us to a practical recognition that these two great divisions of our race form a spiritual Empire of the English-speaking race, not made by constitutions, written documents or formal alliances, but constituting, as Proudhon said in 1845, of Society in general, a 'living being, endowed with an intelligence and activity of its own, and as such, a [spiritual] organic unit'. This great Empire of the English-speaking race must stand united in spirit, though not organically, for unless it stands together there is little hope that in these dreadful years to come that there will be the maintenance of any permanent peace in the only way that peace can be maintained, namely, through the vindication of justice.

I have taken far too long, but I may add that in order to develop this sympathetic understanding we must fully appreciate the difficulties of each nation and 'bear and forbear'.

For example, we have learned to appreciate that which your Empire has done. But, if you will pardon me, I do not think you quite appreciate either the great difficulties of the United States in this crisis, a difficulty which would have been great

if we had only to contend with our heterogeneous population. Has it ever yet occurred to you that we have in the United States of Teutonic origin, counting birth or immediate parentage, a population equal to one-third of all the men, women, and children of Great Britain? Then we have, as I have explained, the great difficulty of a persistent tradition, which in all generations has powerfully influenced the American mind and has been hitherto vindicated by its results. Can you not see that you must not misinterpret a nation which cannot in a day abandon a cherished tradition, even if it be conceded that the interests of civilization required it?

### *The Aid Afforded by the United States*

Then there is a disposition on this side among some men to misinterpret what we have tried to do as a people to help you. Some of the very things for which we have been most criticized are those that seem to me to redound to our credit.

Take, for example, the sale of munitions. It is believed by many here that we have in a sordid and mercenary way deliberately profited by this world-tragedy; that while civilization was on the Cross we have been, as the Roman soldiers, parting the raiment of the crucified.

Only an infinitesimal portion of the American people directly profited by this traffic. Indirectly, it is true, we have all profited by the immense prosperity thereby stimulated; but have you thought of the other side? We have abandoned not only an unbroken friendship with the first military Power of the world to give you munitions, but we have incurred an obligation that will weigh heavily upon us in future years far beyond any possible economic profits that our industries may temporarily gain by furnishing the Allies with munitions. To have placed an embargo on munitions to safeguard our internal peace and outward safety would not have violated neutrality in a legal sense. Sweden and Holland have forbidden many exports to protect their vital interests. We refused to do so as to war munitions, because the American people believed that in the earlier stages of the war you needed our aid and were determined that at any cost you should have it. We fully realized that in doing so we exposed ourselves to a great and continuing peril. Why did 145,000 men recently parade the streets of

New York from early dawn to night? Why did 100,000 men parade in Chicago? Why did 60,000 men parade in Boston? Was it Mexico? We care no more about a possible war with Mexico than a St. Bernard dog cares for a black-and-tan terrier. What was the meaning of this outpouring of all classes? We know that we have incurred the undying enmity of Germany by doing you a service. We know that if she wins this war or even makes it a draw, that as sure as political events can ever be prognosticated, Germany will settle its account with the United States, for there is no country in the world next to the British Empire that Germany to-day hates as she does the United States. To avoid this very danger, which will burden us for generations to come, shifty politicians attempted to put an embargo on the export of munitions, but public opinion said 'No', and our President called Congress together and made them stand up and be counted, and thereafter there was no threatened interruption to the flow of munitions of war to the Allies. As a result we are now doubling our Army and largely increasing our Navy, and future generations will bear the burden.

*America's Help to the Victims*

Do you realize that not only have we contributed by the sacrificing labours of men, women, and children, at least ten millions of pounds to relieve suffering in this war; but that over 4,000 of our boys are fighting under the Maple Leaf for the Union Jack; and 10,000 more are serving under the tricolour of France? The best blood of our youth from our Colleges and Universities are serving with the Ambulances, and doing the arduous and often dangerous work of taking the wounded from the trenches. If the bones of your sons are now buried in France, there are the bones of many a brave American boy who, without the protection of his flag, and with only the impulse of race patriotism, with the love which the majority of the American people feel for the cause of the Allies in this crisis, have gone and given their young lives as a willing sacrifice. Therefore, I say to you, men of England, if there are pinpricks, do not misjudge the American people, who have done what they did under the most trying and delicate circumstances, and whose loyalty to the Empire of the English-speaking race has been demonstrated in this crisis of history.

I am reminded very much of a scene I saw in Switzerland, in Lauterbrunnen, that most beautiful valley in all the world. There are the three crowning peaks of the Bernese Oberland, the Eiger, the Monch, and the Jungfrau. They are apparently separate, and yet all three are based upon the common granite foundation of the eternal Alps. So I like to think of the three great democracies of civilization—Great Britain, France, and the United States—that while they are separate peaks in a purely political sense, yet they too stand upon a common foundation of justice and liberty.

Our affection and admiration for France passes description. We think of France in this crisis as brave as Hector and yet like Andromache ‘smiling through her tears’ and offering up the sacrifice of her noble youth for the principles of liberty and justice, to which Great Britain and the United States have always been dedicated.

I remember once when I was in this valley of Lauterbrunnen that the Swiss guide asked me if he could sound for me an echo of an Alpine horn. He played the four notes of the common chord, and as they reverberated back across the valley they were merged into the most gracious and beautiful harmonies that the mind of man could conceive. It sounded as if in that Cathedral of Nature some one was playing a divinely majestic organ. I like to think these four notes thus mingled typify the common traditions of these three great democracies and create a lasting harmony, which will contribute to the symphony of universal progress.

The Swiss guide also asked me to hear the echo of a little brass cannon, and as he fired it the effect was almost bewildering. It seemed to me as if the very mountains had toppled from their bases. The smoke of the cannon drifted across my eyes, and for a moment obliterated the majestic range of the Bernese Alps. Finally the smoke cleared from my eyes, and the Eiger, the Monch, and the Jungfrau were again revealed in their undiminished beauty. May not that little cannon well typify Prussian militarism.

When the smoke of this Titanic conflict passes from our eyes and the echoes of this portentous war shall die away into the terrible past, we shall—please God—see outlined against the infinite blue of His future these great democracies of civilization—Great Britain, France, and the United States.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE  
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, FEBRUARY 23, 1917, ON  
THE RESTRICTION OF IMPORTS

IN rising to move, 'That this House do now adjourn,' I, first of all, must apologize for my not being prepared yesterday, as I had anticipated, to make a statement. As a matter of fact, at the very moment that I should have been making the statement, I was engaged in discussion of this very problem with Ministers from France, who had come here concerned with exactly the same problem as has been engaging the attention of the Government here for some time.

*Tonnage the Important Factor*

The ultimate success of the Allied cause depends, in my judgement, on our solving the tonnage difficulties with which we are confronted. Before the war our shipping tonnage was only just adequate. There was a very large shipbuilding programme, but it was to a very considerable extent suspended after the war, owing to the essential activities of the Navy. Since the war began there have been enormous increases in the demands upon our tonnage. There is transport for the Navy, transport for the Army, and for our expeditions in France and in Eastern waters. Our Allies have made very considerable demands upon British tonnage. Over a million tons of our shipping have been allocated to France alone. There is a very considerable tonnage set aside for Russia and also for Italy, and the balance left for the ordinary needs of the nation, after providing for these war exigencies, is only about half the whole of our tonnage.

*Shipbuilding Capacity*

The shipbuilding capacity of this country has been considerably limited, I might say enormously limited, by the greatly increased demands for shipbuilding for the Navy, and the ordinary wear and tear of the Navy. On the top of that there has been, undoubtedly, a very considerable tonnage of

our shipping sunk by submarines in the course of the last two and a half years of warfare. In the last four or five months, as my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Admiralty stated in his speech yesterday, the ratio of the sinking of our tonnage has increased, and this month, owing to the very special efforts made by Germany, has been the worst.

#### *German Submarines*

The Germans have concentrated upon the building of submarines in order to destroy our mercantile marine, fully realizing that that is far away the most effective way, and the only effective way, of putting out of action what they consider to be the most formidable item in the Alliance. There has been for some time, and I think the House must know it, and the country must know it, a shortage of tonnage for the ordinary needs of the nation, and even a certain shortage for the military exigencies of our Allies and ourselves. My right hon. friend made a very frank statement the other day as to the facts. He withheld nothing from the House, but there is always a disposition to dwell upon what is pleasant in a statement, and rather to ignore the graver or disquieting aspects of a statement. Undoubtedly that is so, and I regret that I noticed a litt'le of that even in the comments on my right hon. friend's statement. It is far better that the nation should realize absolutely what is the position. I have nothing new to say, but I do ask you to read, and read a second time, the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and you will then get a perfect view of the state of things, and it is undoubtedly one that calls for the gravest measures to deal with the problem. If we take it in hand, and take it in hand at once, and take very drastic measures, we can cope with that peril. If we do not, I am not going to withhold from the House the fact that if the nation is not prepared to accept drastic measures for dealing with the submarine peril, there is disaster in front of us, and I am here with all the responsibility of a Minister of the Crown to tell the House and the nation that fact. The Government are proposing measures. We mean to propose measures which we think will be adequate. It means enormous sacrifices on the part of every class in the community, and the national grit is going to be tested by the answer that is going to

be given to the statement I make to-day on behalf of the Government.

#### *The Shipping Position*

I will give the House an indication of what the shipping position is, by reading the figures of the tonnage of British ships that entered our ports twelve months before the war and during the last twelve months. I want you to bear in mind that very nearly half of our tonnage is engaged in war work. In the twelve months before the war about 50,000,000 of tonnage entered British ports. During the last twelve months that was reduced to 30,000,000 tons. That is not submarine work. That is almost exclusively attributable to the fact that a very large proportion of our tonnage has been allocated to the Allies. A very considerable proportion of our tonnage goes direct to France with commodities from America and elsewhere, and a good deal of our tonnage goes to Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and Salonica. But that shows the extent to which the tonnage available for carrying commodities to the United Kingdom has been reduced owing to the inevitable operations of war, apart altogether from the German submarine menace.

I have only one or two words to say about that matter. It was dealt with very fully in the able statement of my right hon. friend. The Government are hopeful of finding means of dealing effectively with the German submarines; but we should be guilty of criminal folly if we rested our action or our policy on a tranquil anticipation of being able to realize that hope. We must be able to carry the war through to a victorious end, however long victory may tarry, even though we fail to hunt the submarine out of the deep. There is no sure foundation for victory except that. I want the House and the country to realize that. We cannot build on anything else. A great deal of our tonnage has been sunk, and I dare say a good deal more will be sunk before we shall succeed in overcoming that menace. But even if we succeed, there is one warning which is quite necessary.

#### *Command of the Sea only Relative*

The command of the seas has never been absolute. You cannot achieve complete immunity from piratical attacks on your ships whatever you do. That is the lesson of history.

The sea is wide, and it is trackless. In the wars of Louis XIV we had command of the sea as we had at the Battle of Trafalgar. Still, hundreds of our ships were sunk every year. You cannot command complete immunity on the sea, and if we are able to discover something that will make the life of the submarine almost impossible on the sea, even then you cannot guarantee that ships will not be sunk by these piratical methods. Therefore, you have got to deal with the problem of tonnage ruthlessly and promptly, and I say so now because, on behalf of the Government, I am submitting measures for dealing with that shortage—measures which, as I have already stated, involve great sacrifices on the part of the community.

#### *Dealing with the Menace*

Now, what are those measures? They are divided into three categories. First of all, the measures to be adopted by the Navy for grappling with the menace. My right hon. friend dealt with those very fully in his statement, and I will not say anything more about them. The second is the building of merchant ships wherever we can get them. The third is to limit our needs for oversea transport by dispensing with all non-essential commodities now being brought from over the seas and by producing as much of the essentials of life as we can at home. There is one thing which I must say about shipbuilding, because here I have got to make a special appeal to labour.

#### *Increase of Tonnage Output*

I am convinced, after a great deal of examination of the problem, and hearing what has been said by both employers and working men, that the output can be very considerably increased by an alteration of the methods. Wherever payment by results has been introduced there has been an increase in the output of shipbuilding yards, sometimes of 20, sometimes 30, and sometimes even 40 per cent. We have made a special appeal to the great trade unions concerned in shipbuilding to assent to the introduction of these methods. In some yards they have already been introduced. I was very glad to get a telegram from Liverpool yesterday stating that the Liverpool trade unions had agreed to recommend to their workmen that that course should be pursued. It also involves an undertaking

on the part of the employers that if large wages are made by men as a result of special efforts no advantage must be taken of that to reduce the rates, and I am perfectly certain, from what they told me, that they have no intention of doing anything of the kind. And if they do, I want them to feel that not merely the Government, but the House of Commons, would be behind the Government in deprecating any attempt to penalize the good worker by reducing the rate of payment. That has been the great folly of the past, and that is why the fear of these piece rates has simply bitten into the workmen's mind. In America they have never made that mistake. The result has been that huge wages are earned, but in the long run the employers have discovered that it pays them better. That is all I want to say about shipbuilding. It is really essential that we should get as much work as possible out of the yards, not merely for shipbuilding for our mercantile marine, but for the building of craft for coping with the submarines at sea. Our shipbuilding capacity, the greatest in the world, is barely adequate for the gigantic task which has been thrown upon it, because we have practically to sustain the whole of the burden ourselves. The Italian, the French, and the Russian contribution is a very substantial one, but, in the main, the burden is on the shoulders of Britain ; and if workmen and employers in all classes of the community strive to do their utmost I believe that Great Britain can bear that burden successfully right to the end.

#### *Encouragement of Home Production*

Now we come to the second method of dealing with this problem of tonnage—that is home production. Let us take the articles of the greatest bulk which consume our tonnage.

#### *Timber Question*

The first is timber. Last year we imported 6,400,000 tons of timber from abroad. That does not include what was taken direct to France. That means that there is still another very considerable figure to be added on to that. Therefore, the figure for the tonnage of timber brought to these islands in the course of last year is 6,400,000 tons. Of these two millions are pit props for our collieries. The bulk of the remainder is used for the military forces here and in France. Some of this has

been sent direct to France. That is necessary for the efficiency of the Army, for the construction of dug-outs, for railway sleepers, for trench boards, and for a variety of other things. It is quite obvious that if tonnage is to be saved, this is one of the first problems to be attacked. We have had a very able Committee, presided over by Sir Henry Babington Smith, one of the most capable servants of the State, who have gone into this amongst other questions. The first suggestion that they make is that a good deal might be saved by increased economy in the use of timber. They do not suggest waste, but they are convinced, in view of the importance of setting every ton of shipping tonnage free, that if an appeal is made to those who are using timber substantial economy will be effected. Arrangements have been made for going into the question, both here and in France, as to the best method of economizing the use of timber either behind the lines or in this country. The second method is by making the Army in France self-supporting. The Army in France is a very considerable consumer of timber, and here appeals have been made from time to time to the French Government, and the French Government have been extraordinarily liberal in responding. They have already placed two forests at the disposal of our Army, and I am afraid we shall have to appeal to them to make greater sacrifices of their beautiful forests, as tonnage is as vital to them as to ourselves, in order to conduct the war successfully. If we can manage to secure a sufficient number of forests in France, and also secure labour for the purpose of the cutting down of trees, there will be an enormous saving of tonnage in respect of timber.

#### *Home Supplies of Timber*

The third method is by developing some home supplies, and making this country self-supporting during the war in timber. I do not think it is very long ago, so the Colonial Secretary assures me, when the collieries in this country got practically the whole of their pit props here. The woods are here, and there is no doubt at all that if we have the labour and the means of transport the whole of the enormous tonnage now used in importing timber could be saved, and that is one of the questions to which we are devoting ourselves. By and by we shall have to make an appeal to find the necessary men, who

are just as essential, in order to enable us to get pit props in this country. There is a good deal of other timber in this country, and, in fact, I am not sure that we have not got practically all the timber we require for the duration of the war, provided we can get the necessary labour for the purpose of cutting it and transporting it. So far as pit props are concerned, you need not have skilled labour. It is not a very highly skilled operation, and, in fact, I believe that boys, who are used in some cases, enjoy themselves very much in cutting these lengths of timber. We therefore do not require skilled labour for that purpose. But when we come to the cutting of other timber you must undoubtedly have the introduction of a certain percentage of highly skilled labour. I am told that we have got a considerable number of woodmen and foresters not of military age on the large estates of this country, and if they volunteer to assist us then you could dilute their labour with unskilled workmen and by that means, I think, we have sufficient labour here. In due course, to cut down pit props for practically the whole of our collieries, and also to cut down a sufficient quantity of other timber, would enable us to set free hundreds of thousands if not millions of tons of shipping. Therefore, I trust when the appeal is made to woodmen and to foresters to enrol themselves in the new army for the purpose of assisting the State at this critical juncture, both employers and workmen will render all assistance in their power for the achievement of this end. We will also need thousands if not tens of thousands of unskilled workmen, who will be able to assist them in work which does not require high skill, because there is no branch of our national facilities where so much tonnage can be saved as in the cutting down of timber and carrying it to the necessary points where it is to be used.

#### *Iron Ore*

The next heaviest item is iron ore. We are melting millions of tons every year of iron ore, and we cannot cut down the supply by a single ton. It is essential for munitions of war, essential for shipbuilding, and essential for the machinery required in agricultural work. Therefore, we must find ships for this work at all costs, in order not to diminish the efficiency of the Army and Navy, which would be folly. There are means

for finding these minerals in this country ; as a matter of fact, there is plenty of ore in this country. It is rather low-grade ore, its quality is not so good, and, being low-grade ore, it did not pay, as a commercial proposition, to dig it. It was cheaper to get the better class of ore from Spain. But this is not a commercial question. This is not a question of getting ore ; it is a question of getting ore at all, and getting it without using up our tonnage. It involves, unfortunately, the increasing of our number of blast furnaces. That means more labour for building and carrying on the work, and there is a very limited supply : in fact, there is no margin of supply of highly-skilled men who work these blast furnaces. We have protected them against recruiting for months. In spite of that fact, we are short of the necessary supply of labour for our blast furnaces. What is required for the purpose of increasing our supply of ore ? There are mines, I am told, in Lincolnshire ; there are mines in Cumberland, and there are the famous Cleveland mines, all producing excellent ore ; and I am told that if we could increase the labour in those mines we could augment by millions of tons a year the quantity of ore which can be produced in this country. Here, again, you require skilled labour as well as unskilled labour. I want to make a special appeal to both classes. The skilled labour is only available in the stone and slate quarries of North Wales and in some of the collieries where at the present moment the mines are not working full time. There are, I am told, a certain number of mines from which they might be able to spare a few miners for this purpose. In those two directions we might be able to secure the necessary number of skilled men, and for the unskilled men we must trust the people of this country to place their services at the disposal of Mr. Neville Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of assisting in this all-important task. I have named only two directions where we can, if we put forth reasonable efforts, secure tonnage to the extent of millions of tons per year. Unfortunately in those cases the saving can come only fairly late in the year.

#### *Food Supplies*

I now come to the third, and perhaps the most important, direction in which by home production we can assist to enable the country to overcome its difficulties, and that is in the pro-

<sup>1</sup> The Director of National Service.

duction of food supplies. Twenty years after the Corn Laws were abolished in this country we produced twice as much wheat as we imported, and that twenty years after the abolition of the Corn Laws. Since then four or five million acres of arable land have become pasture, and about half the agricultural population—the agricultural labouring population—has emigrated to the Colonies. No doubt the State showed a lamentable indifference to the importance of the agricultural industry and to the very life of the nation, and that is a mistake which must never be repeated. No civilized country in the world spent less on agriculture, or even spent so little on agriculture, either directly or indirectly, as we did. I ventured to call attention to this in 1909, but inasmuch as my statement was mixed up with a good deal of controversial matter, it was not in the least acceptable to the very people for whom it was designed. Between 70 and 80 per cent. of our staple cereal for consumption has been imported yearly, and at the present moment I want the country to know our food stocks are low, alarmingly low—lower than they have been within recollection. That is very largely due to the bad harvest. It is not altogether submarines. It is in the main due to our having had about the worst harvest within our recollection. Last year's crops were a failure, and that, of course, is a very serious fact when our tonnage is absorbed to such an extent by war exigencies, and when our tonnage is diminishing. It is essential, therefore, for the safety of the nation—for the maintenance of the nation, for the life of the nation—that we should put forth immediately every effort to increase production for this year's harvest and the next, and that we should do it immediately.

#### *The 1917 Harvest*

The immediate concern is this year's harvest. It would have been easier to have done it had we done it some time ago, but some of the measures we have had to take have had to be crowded into a few weeks, and I ask, when that occurs, that some measure of indulgence should be given to a man who, like the President of the Board of Agriculture, is working under very difficult conditions—I say working under very difficult conditions and crowding into six weeks work that ought to have been done two years ago. It is true I am speaking for

him and myself; I am entitled to do it all the more because I was a member of that Government, and I hope every other member of the Government at that time, and every supporter of that Government at that time, will extend the same indulgence which I think ought to extend to the right hon. gentleman. There are only a few weeks in which to sow the spring wheat, the oats, the barley, and the potatoes. The winter wheat season has gone, and it is urgently necessary that the farmers should be induced to increase the area under cultivation at once, otherwise the nation may have to choose between diminishing its military effort and underfeeding its population. That is the choice which Germany is taking, the choice of giving too little food rather than to diminish its military power and strength and striking power. That is a choice we wish to avert if we possibly can in this country; and we can do so. What is the main obstacle to inducing farmers to increase cultivation? Partly lack of labour. In some counties, under the voluntary system labour has flocked to the standard and farms were left derelict. Some of those are about the most important corn-producing districts in this country. There was no system. When the labourer chose to go there was no one to stop him, and there is no doubt at all that a good many districts have been depleted owing to the over-zeal and patriotism of the labourers themselves. Since the Military Service Acts there has been some discrimination exercised. At any rate, there are tribunals who have been sitting in judgment in these cases, and considering the facts placed before them. May I say, with regard to the 30,000 men called up out of the 60,000 whom the tribunals have dispensed with, only 10,000 have really been called up. If you travel across and athwart France you will find no able-bodied men of military age engaged anywhere. All the cultivators of the soil are engaged in defending that soil, and there the farmer is dependent almost entirely upon men over or under military age, upon women working on the farms, and upon substitutes.

#### *The Farmer's Experience*

But the greatest obstacle to taking immediate action to meet this exigency is the timidity of the farmer when it comes to cutting up his pasture. He has been caught twice with too

much arable land, and caught very badly—once in 1880 and the other time in 1890—and then he had years of anxiety, depression, and insolvency, his savings completely absorbed, and very often he himself for years water-logged.

There is no memory so tenacious as that of the tiller of the soil; and the furrows are still in the agricultural mind. Those years have given the British farmer a fright of the plough, and it is no use arguing with him. You must give him confidence, otherwise he will refuse to go between the shafts. Now the plough is our hope. You must cure the farmer of his plough fright, otherwise you will not get crops. What does he say? The farmer thinks in rotations; he is not thinking merely of what will happen next year. When he is cutting up his pasture he has got to think of years ahead, otherwise he is a loser. It is no use promising him big prices for next year and then dropping him badly for the next few years. He has got before his eyes a picture of accumulated crops across the seas, ready to be dumped down in this country the moment the war is over. He says, ‘Prices will break: I shall have to cut up my pasture, and I shall be done for,’ and he thinks of 1880 and of 1890 and what happened then, and he cannot face it again. That is the real fact. Every farmer we have appealed to has always talked in that sense, and we must get over that, otherwise he will not cut up his pasture land.

#### *Prices after the War*

I do not agree, myself, that prices are going down immediately after the war. I think the farmer is overlooking two or three important facts. Germany after the war will be a greater purchaser than ever, because her land has been let down, and that is true of the whole of Europe. The crop-raising land of Europe will not raise as much per acre as it did before the war. The land has been impoverished and has become unclean, and it is poorer, and it will take years to make it as good a harvest-raising soil as it was before it was devastated by war, so that the demand for foreign food will be greater than ever immediately after the war. Then, of course, there will be a year of demobilization, and our tonnage will be down, and not merely ours but neutral tonnage as well, because there is a far greater percentage of loss amongst the neutrals than there is amongst

us, because we are protecting our ships by means of guns. All that must necessarily produce, I think, high prices for some time after the war. You cannot persuade the farmer of that, and it is essential that we should get him persuaded, and persuaded within the next few days, and it is no use going on to argue with him. My right hon. friend has done his best to persuade him, but, after all, you have got to cover a very extensive country, and therefore there is only one way of ensuring immediate action on the part of the farmer, and that is by guaranteeing prices for a definite period of time - minimum prices.

*Prices and Labour must be Guaranteed*

Before I come to the actual prices which we guarantee, I was going to say that there are two or three corollaries to a guarantee of prices. The first is that if the Government guarantees prices, labour must also be guaranteed. I do not believe any farmer, looking at the prospects, can fail to see that the old wages are gone—and a good thing, not merely for the labourer, but for the farmer. The best farmers in a district are those who give the best wages. Take Scotland for example. A guarantee of minimum wages will hardly touch Scotland. There is no better farmer—I do not say anything about other farmers—but there is no doubt the Scottish farmer is about the best in the world. There is another point which the farmer must realize. The agricultural labourer has flocked to the standard in shoals. His wife is getting a bigger separation allowance than the poor fellow earned as wages before the war, and can any one imagine that in face of that the first thing the man will do will be to start work at a figure lower than the allowance which was thought to be the minimum which the State ought to give to keep his wife and family going?

*A Minimum Wage*

It is utterly impossible ; you will not do it ; you will not get the labourer back to the land unless you pay him a minimum wage, and the farmer must see that. There is also another fact which has brought it home to the farmer, and that is that in Mr. Neville Chamberlain's scheme for National Service a minimum wage has been fixed at 25s., which is obviously applicable to the agricultural labourer, and every farmer knows

that, and we propose to take that figure. We discussed for some time the question of whether you should have a Wage Board to fix wages or whether you should have a fixed minimum. That is what influenced us eventually in not setting up a Wage Board during the war. The farmer—I will not say preferred to know the worst, but he preferred to know exactly what he had to face. He did not want to be bothered with Wage Boards : he preferred to concentrate the whole of his mind on ploughing the land. After the war Wage Boards can be set up, and the farmer will then, of course, make use of them.

#### *Wages in Ireland*

A difficulty here arises in respect to Ireland. Wages are low in this country, but they are sumptuous compared to those paid in Ireland. There is also the difficulty there of special conditions. We were assured that in Ireland they preferred—whether I am right or wrong, those best acquainted with Irish feeling will be able to inform us in the course of the debate—but that in Ireland they preferred Wage Boards being set up to consider the local conditions. They are more accustomed than we to tribunals fixing agricultural prices. Therefore they will take more readily to it than perhaps would those concerned in England, Scotland, or Wales. A wage of 25s. per week will be guaranteed to every able-bodied male between the ages indicated in the scheme of Mr. Neville Chamberlain.

Then comes another question. There will, of course, be disputes. I should hope there will not be many. But there may be disputes.

#### *The Old Age Question*

It is obvious that when you guarantee a minimum wage of 25s. old men who have been taken on and kept very much through the charity of the farmer and whom the farmer could dispense with readily will come into account. Such an old man might very well be worth 10s. or 11s. a week for just dawdling about the farm, and liking it, but if you say a man of that sort is to have 25s. a week it is the greatest unkindness you can do him. There are other similar cases of men who are not old, but who may be inefficient or crippled, but who would be able to render a little assistance about the farm. It is obvious that cases of this kind must be exceptions. We propose during

the war to adopt a rough-and-ready method similar to the machinery set up by Mr. Neville Chamberlain to decide similar questions under his scheme. That is an answer to my hon. friend. Mr. Balfour reminds me that it is not merely during the war that this guarantee of a minimum wage will be given, but during the period when there will be a guarantee of prices. I will come to that period later. There is a second plan, a corollary to that guarantee of prices which was mentioned by Lord Lansdowne—with approval, I was glad to see—this week in the House of Lords ; in fact, he also mentioned the minimum wage as practically a corollary to the fixing of prices. There must be a guarantee, if the State is going to guarantee a minimum price, that it shall not inure to the advantage of any individual or of any class.

#### *No Increase of Rents*

There must not be any return to what happened during the Napoleonic wars. There was an enormous increase in prices, and rents were practically doubled at the end of the war. It would be obviously unfair that any class should take advantage of war conditions, and especially that they should take advantage of a guarantee by the State by which the State might lose money—should take advantage of that State guarantee to raise rents.

Let me say at once that I have not heard of such cases. No complaints have reached the Government of anything of the kind, and in all the meetings we have had with the agricultural community no one has ever suggested that anything of the kind has happened. When however, the House of Commons is asked to guarantee prices, I think it is entitled to have a guarantee that even in exceptional cases—cases, for instance, where estates are sold and a new owner comes into possession and proposes to raise rents—there should be some opportunity for review, and that in these cases rents shall not be raised in consequence of this guarantee of price. Of course, there are some cases where rents would have been raised even in times of peace, and even under old prices.

#### *Cases where Change in Rent is Right*

For instance, you have the case where the old tenant has been allowed to remain for forty or fifty years at a very low rent,

and it has been thoroughly understood that once there was a change of tenancy the landlord intended, and rightly intended, to put up the rent to what was just and fair between the parties. In those cases there is not going to be any interference. Another case is a rather complicated one. The tithe rent-charge has gone up enormously since the rise in prices. It is obvious that the landlord should have the right to, at any rate, adjust the rent in consequence of the rise in prices which brings better profit to the farmer himself. There have not been many cases, but the way in which we propose to deal with these cases is to say that the landlord shall not be allowed to raise his rent except with the consent of the Board of Agriculture, so that each particular case can be examined by the Board of Agriculture to see whether there is or is not a case.

#### *Cultivation to be Enforced*

Powers are to be given to the Board of Agriculture to enforce cultivation. It is obvious that it is an injustice to the community that a man should sit on land capable of producing food when he is either too selfish or too indolent to do anything. So that the Government must have the right, through the proper Department, to enforce cultivation in these cases. Now I come to the question of prices.

#### *The Price of Corn*

In 1915 the price of wheat was 52s. 10d. a quarter; in 1916, 58s. 5d.; in the last quarter of 1916 it went up to 68s. 2d.; it is now 76s. 3d. Before the war it was 34s. 11d. Let me, however, say this, that the price of everything has gone up, and has gone up, not merely for the ordinary community, but for the farmer. The farmer has had to pay very much higher wages—and I am glad of it. He has, however, got to pay much higher prices for everything which he uses on his farm. He has got to do with less labour, and with inferior labour. I was assured by a farmer whom we consulted, and who is one of the most upright men I have ever met, and who, I am perfectly certain, would not mislead the Government, that on the prices we were guaranteeing the farmer, on the whole he would not make much out of them, having regard to all the conditions. That was, he said, the very minimum you could give him if you are going to induce him to cultivate at all. Oats in 1915, 30s. 2d.; in 1916,

33s. 5d. ; last quarter, 38s. 4d. ; and for the week ending the 17th February, 47s. 3d. Barley has gone up correspondingly, and potatoes—well, the House knows fairly well what the price of potatoes is. I can assure the House that I know fairly well all about the price of potatoes.

*The Question of Potatoes*

But let me say just a word about that, because there has been a good deal of trouble about it. The moment you interfere with the price of potatoes it becomes a very difficult thing—it is the most difficult thing in the world. My hon. friend knows very well that if we had not interfered the price was going up to £20 a ton. Potatoes had been sold at £20 a ton. Were we to allow that to be done ? There is a shortage of potatoes, but that has nothing to do with the submarines. The potato crop is raised here mostly, and the price is determined by what you have got in this country. It would have gone to almost any figure because the potato crop was a great failure here. It was a great failure in Ireland, and Ireland, instead of being a contributor to this country, had almost ceased to assist us. My right hon. friend Lord Devonport<sup>1</sup> was bound to interfere or to allow the price to get completely out of hand. Of course the moment you begin to interfere with prices there is always a conflict, and everybody who knew nothing about it begins interfering, and here we had the usual results. My right hon. friend was absolutely right in trying to cut down the prices, and the farmer on the other hand was equally right in trying to get as good a price as he could. At any rate, the matter has been fought out, and I believe it has been substantially settled though we had not much time to settle it in. That is the position in regard to potatoes ; but the great advantage has been that we have managed to keep down the prices, and, on the whole, we have managed to satisfy the farmers as well. So much for the vexed question of potatoes.

*Proposed Guarantees*

These are the guarantees we propose to give. We propose that in the present year we shall guarantee—

For wheat, 60s. a quarter of 504 lb., that is the minimum ;  
For 1918 and 1919, 55s. ;

<sup>1</sup> The then Food Controller.

For 1920, 1921, and 1922, 45s. Then the guarantee comes to an end.

For oats, in 1917, we propose to guarantee 38s. 6d. per 336 lb. That is higher than the minimum price we arranged with Ireland some months ago.

The guarantee for 1918 and 1919 is 32s., and

For the next three years 24s.

Potatoes we simply propose to guarantee for this coming season at £6 per ton.

The only guarantee we have given of the maximum is this, that if the State commandeers either potatoes or cereals, the prices will not be fixed without the consent of the Boards of Agriculture of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and, therefore, there will be an opportunity of consultation before the prices are fixed. Obviously, you cannot limit the power of the State to commandeer for national purposes.

#### *What the Farmers are Doing*

I hope and trust that, with this guarantee, the farmers will put their backs into it. We are having excellent reports from Scotland. In Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, Forfar, and other counties they are cutting up pasture on a very considerable scale to sow oats and plant potatoes. Although it is now very late, the farmers could increase even now by hundreds of thousands of tons the food of this country this year. And thus they can help to defeat the grimdest menace that ever threatened a country's life. I do not believe that they will fail us.

#### *Labour Substitution*

Substitutes are used in every other country. Women are working now on the land, and I hope the farmers will assist to make the best of the labour which is available. They need not apprehend that in the future the country will be indifferent to the importance of the agricultural interest to the State. The country is alive now, as it has never been before, to the essential value of agriculture to the community, and whatever befalls, it will never again be neglected by any Government. The war, at any rate, has taught us one lesson—that the preservation of our essential industries is as important a part of the national defences as the maintenance of our Army or our Navy. So much will I say about food production.

*The Saving of Tonnage*

If these plans are carried out in respect of timber and minerals and food a very considerable quantity of tonnage will be saved. But the extent of the saving in timber, minerals, and farm produce cannot be measured or depended upon at this stage. There are so many uncertain elements. There is labour, especially skilled labour, and in the case of the land there is the element of the weather—the weather for ploughing, for sowing, for ripening, and for the reaping of the corn, so that even at the best the fruition of all these plans must come late. Timber is a relief to tonnage in the summer. Our plans with regard to all may not develop for months, and the farmers' efforts will not help us until the harvest. Meanwhile, tonnage is needed—urgently needed. The French Ministers have been with me two days begging for more ships. The Italian Minister has only just left. He came here on the same errand. We ourselves are short of tonnage for certain important commodities. Therefore, we must save tonnage, not in the summer time, not in the harvest, but we must save tonnage now and save it on a considerable scale.

*Restriction of Imports*

That brings me to the next series of questions. We must have an immediate substantial saving of additional tonnage. What are the methods we propose? The lives of our sailors—our gallant sailors—and the life of this gallant country must not be risked on the carriage of any goods not essential to the national existence. What are the essential commodities? Let us cut down ruthlessly things that are not necessary. The essential commodities are food and clothing necessary for the maintenance and equipment of the civil and military population both here and abroad, and that touches everything: raw materials for our munitions and equipment of war, and for the industries essential to the national life or the national credit. Those are essential commodities. Anything beyond that is not essential, and it is running an unnecessary risk, because the nation can do without them during the war, and if it cannot it ought not to wage war. War is a grim business. We have no right to delegate our sacrifices. We must share them as far as we can, and we ought to be proud to share them with the fine fellows

who represent us abroad. It is idle to suggest that—whilst millions of the best citizens of this country are facing discomfort, privation, and death abroad for the great cause, we who are comfortable at home should not be prepared to surrender things which are not necessary to our well-being.

#### *Disposable Imports*

We therefore set up a Committee—I have already referred to it—presided over by Sir Henry Babington Smith, who entered into the whole question of our dispensable and indispensable imports. They knew the tonnage we had to save, for that was given them by the Admiralty. They were told, 'Cut down until you save that tonnage. If you do not, you are impairing the strength of this country in the war.' Acting on those instructions, they went through the whole of our imports and made recommendations. A Cabinet Committee, presided over by Lord Curzon, went through the recommendations of the other Committee, and the Cabinet acted upon the recommendations of these two Committees. One Committee was presided over by Sir Thomas Whittaker, Member for Spenn Valley.

First of all they considered the question of timber. That I have already alluded to. Then there is the question of minerals. There we acted on the recommendation of the Minister of Munitions.

#### *The Question of Paper*

The next question we had to consider was the question of paper, which absorbs a good deal of tonnage in this country. I mean paper for newspapers and paper for wrapping packages. I had no idea that such a quantity of paper was used for that purpose. They both consume an enormous tonnage of paper. Now I cannot say whether I ought to keep newspapers as a luxury, a comfort, a stimulant, but I think if men had to choose between their breakfast and the morning newspapers they would choose the former. But still there is no doubt at all that they have been of enormous assistance to us in the effective waging of the war. There is no better proof of that than the brilliant success achieved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his recent War Loan, and I am sure that he would be the first to acknowledge that that success is in a very large measure

due to the patriotic support given to him by the great newspapers of this country. But still, in war, when we have got to choose between very stern alternatives, I am afraid we shall have to deprive ourselves to a very large extent of a certain number of pages of the prints which we peruse with such satisfaction and instruction every morning.

#### *What has been done in France*

In France, the newspapers have been cut down to practically two sheets. I find the same thing in Italy, and we have come to the conclusion that we have got very substantially to reduce the paper and the paper material imported into this country. In 1914, 1,800,000 tons was imported. I think my right hon. friend was responsible for bringing that down to 1,200,000 tons in 1916. We propose to halve that supply and reduce the annual import to 640,000 tons, the reduction to be distributed equally between the printing and the packing trades.

#### *The Saving Proposed*

I recognize that it is a very serious hardship, but a saving of 1,150,000 tons is a very important addition to our national resources, and I feel it is imperative that it should be made at once. The importation of printed posters, paper hangings, and various kinds of foreign printed matter, such as books and catalogues, will be prohibited; otherwise it would be unfair to the printing trades at home. Restriction in the use of paper for posters, catalogues, and Government Departments will also be made.

#### *Food Restrictions*

Now I come to a reduction in food and feeding-stuffs. The first is in fruit and vegetables. All the essential articles of food will come on the free list. But there are certain articles of diet, of which we import a large quantity, which are not essential to the national living, although very desirable, and which we think it necessary to diminish the import of or prohibit altogether. The principal articles on this list will be as follows: Apples, tomatoes, and certain raw fruits. We have very reluctantly come to the conclusion we shall have to prohibit altogether and depend upon our home supplies; oranges, bananas, grapes, almonds, and nuts will be restricted to 25 per

cent. of the 1916 imports. Aerated mineral and table waters will be prohibited, and we shall have to depend for them upon home industries ; canned salmon 50 per cent., tea we shall have to reduce—foreign teas altogether. They have to be imported from a very considerable distance, and to a certain extent Indian teas will be reduced. Of coffee there is a very large stock in this country, and that stock underordinary conditions would have passed on to Germany, but it is stuck here, and therefore we have enough to get along with until probably after the war. Cocoa has also got stuck here, and for the time being I am afraid we shall prohibit both coffee and cocoa because there are very large stocks in this country. Then there are meat and feeding-stuffs. We think that we could now to a much larger extent depend upon home-grown meat, because we have a larger stock than I think we have ever had in this country. That will save a good deal of feeding-stuff. Taking together all these categories of food and feeding-stuff, we hope to be able to save over 900,000 tons per annum, which shows the extent to which we have relied upon foreign countries for commodities of that kind.

#### *Imports of Manufactured Goods*

If you slaughter the cattle here, then that is a saving of the feeding-stuff that you want to a considerable extent. There are then the manufactured articles, articles of luxury, which run to very much bigger figures than I am sure the House quite realizes. I certainly did not realize it until I went into the figures. We shall have to stop the importation of a very considerable number of these various articles. I regret it deeply in some cases, because a good many of them come from France and Italy. There is no doubt at all that it will be a blow to certain industries in France. Unfortunately, we are driven to do it for the sake of saving tonnage, not merely for ourselves, but for France and Italy as well, and I am sure, if they had to choose between the two, that they would infinitely prefer having the ships for other purposes.

I now come to another very severe restriction upon an article of national luxury.

#### *Alcoholic Liquors*

I am referring to alcoholic liquors. The food stocks in this country, as I have already said, are lower than they

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have ever been. They are perilously low, due not merely to the difficulties of tonnage, but bad harvests. Under these circumstances, we cannot justify the utilization of such a large quantity of foodstuffs, except for the feeding of the people. I say at once that we are not approaching this question from the point of view of temperance, or national or increased sobriety, however desirable that may be in itself, but purely as a method of combating the submarine menace, and guaranteeing the nation against the possibility of famine or privation. The committee who recommended this entered into it purely in that spirit and with that purpose, and they found that it was impossible for us to continue to sanction the absorption of such an enormous tonnage of foodstuffs in grain as long as the nation was faced with a prospect of shortage of essential foodstuffs.

#### *Barley for Brewing*

The quantity of barley used for brewing and distilling has already been reduced. In 1914 there were 36,000,000 standard barrels brewed in this country. The standard barrel, I think, is fifty-five, but that does not mean in bulk. I believe the average is much lower than the standard, and the result is that 36,000,000 barrels mean a good many more barrels in bulk. In 1916 that was reduced to 26,000,000. It was reduced to 26,000,000 partly, no doubt, owing to the fact that about two or three millions of the adult population left these shores, and most of such beers are brewed in France. I do not believe that there is much beer exported from this country to France, and certainly none that the Army needs. Early this year, on the advice of the Food Controller, who had gone into our stocks of food, it was proposed to reduce this 26,000,000 to 18,000,000.

#### *Brewers' Patriotism*

Let me say this at once. The Government are bound to recognize the patriotic spirit in which those who are engaged in this business have faced all the restrictions which have hampered them and reduced their profits during the war. It would not be fair for me not to recognize that at once. It is a powerful trade, and no one knows better than my old colleagues and myself what it can accomplish when its interests are menaced. They have accepted all these interferences in a most laudable

spirit of determination to do all that is in their power to contribute to the safety of the nation, and they have done it great as is the hardship inflicted upon them by the last restriction.

We have to go beyond that last restriction. We have to cut down the balance of 18,000,000. It is absolutely impossible for us to guarantee the food of this country without making a very much deeper cut into the barrelage of the country, and we must reduce it to 10,000,000 barrels.

#### *Advantages of the Restriction*

That means that you will save nearly 600,000 tons of food-stuffs per annum, and that is nearly a month's supply of cereals for this country. That is the direct saving. The indirect saving amounts to something which is a good deal greater. One of our difficulties has been horse transport from America. This and the fodder for those horses have been a serious drain on our shipping, and it will undoubtedly release horses for use in France. That is saving transport and large quantities of food for feeding purposes. It will reduce the barrel traffic on our already congested railways, and we are sadly in need of locomotives and wagons for the Army in France. Although it undoubtedly involves a heavy sacrifice upon a large and important branch of the community, there is no question that it is one of the most effective contributions that could be made at the present time towards a victorious ending of this war. In doing this we must guard against the danger of driving the population from beer to spirits. That would be a serious disaster. Above all, whilst we are cutting down the barrels that can be brewed in this country, we must have a corresponding restriction on the placing of spirits on the market. There are one or two other restrictions, in leather, boots, raw hides, and bottles, which will be found in the Proclamation, but that in the main gives a summary of the restrictions which we propose to impose immediately upon imports, restrictions which we regard as essential in order that we may have the necessary tonnage for the purpose of conducting this war successfully.

#### *Speculative Buying Barred*

It is necessary to secure that there shall be no speculative buying or cornering of supplies so as to raise prices above the

level of the prices at the beginning of this week. That will not be permitted or tolerated, and the Food Controller, therefore, in any such cases will assume entire control of supplies, fix prices, and issue them as circumstances and his judgement warrant. My right hon. friend [Mr. Long] reminds me of another matter, and I think it will come in very well in the statement I am going to make now.

#### *Accept the Proposals as a Whole*

These restrictions have been very carefully considered, and I appeal to the House, and through the House to the country, to take them as a whole. It is very easy to pick any one out and say, 'You are not saving very much tonnage here; cannot you let that go?' One man appeals for oranges. Another says, 'Why not let bananas in? You don't save much tonnage.' Another says, 'What about French bonnets? It is rather hard on France.' Well, that is true. I do not mean to say that if you cut out one of these the nation sinks; but if you begin giving way the whole fabric will go. I have seen it tried before, and that was the difficulty that confronted us then, as my right hon. friend knows. There was, first of all, an attack on this, and a good case made out. You can make a good case for any one individual restriction, and so somebody could make an equally good case for another. It is perfectly true.

#### *Some Injuries Inevitable*

It is with the deepest regret that we are inflicting an injury upon the French—upon the industries of some of our Allies. It is inevitable. We have got to cut down imports from France, and to that extent there is no doubt at all that there will be a certain amount of suffering in that poor, devoted country. Then somebody may say, 'There are the colonies—are you going to deprive British Columbia of the chance of sending her supplies? She has been very loyal—very patriotic.' So she has. No part of the Empire has shown greater patriotism. The same thing applies to the other colonies. My right hon. friend has just told me that he has seen one or two of the Premiers who have arrived here, to whom he has explained the matter, and they met it in a spirit of loyal patriotism. They said that whatever temporary hurt it might inflict upon

important industries in their country, if it is essential to enable the Empire to win, they felt certain their people would agree to it. So will ours. I have never had the slightest doubt about it.

*Sacrifice by those at Home Essential*

If all this programme is carried out ; if all those who can help us with production do help ; if all those who are called upon to suffer restrictions and limitations will suffer without complaint, then honestly I say we can face the worst that the enemy can do—the worst ! And that is what we ought to be prepared for. If we are not—if it were conceivable that the nation was not prepared to do and endure all these things—then I say with all solemnity I do not know the body of honourable men who would undertake for one hour to be responsible for the conduct of this terrible war. It is essential. There are millions of gallant young men in France, in Salonica, in Egypt, in Mesopotamia facing torture, terror, death. They are the flower of our race. Unless the nation at home is prepared to take its share of the sacrifice, theirs would be in vain, and I say it would be a crime—a black crime—for any Government to ask them to risk their brave lives in the coming conflict if they knew that the nation behind them were faint-hearted or selfish. Their sacrifice would be thrown away. We have no right to ask it. For that reason I have come down, after long deliberation and thought, careful and searching, on behalf of the Government of this country, to submit to the House of Commons, and through the House of Commons to the nation, proposals which I hope the Commons will approve, and which I hope the nation will carry out with an unflinching and an ungrudging heart.

## PRESIDENT WILSON

TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS ON FEBRUARY 26, 1917

### UNITED STATES SHIPPING TO BE PROTECTED

#### *Germany Breaks her Promise*

I HAVE again asked the privilege of addressing you, because we are moving through critical times, during which it seems to me to be my duty to keep in close touch with the Houses of Congress, so that neither counsel nor action run at cross-purposes between us. On the 3rd of February I officially informed you of the sudden and unexpected action of the Imperial German Government in declaring its intention to disregard the promises made to this Government in April last, and to undertake immediate submarine operations against all commerce, whether belligerent or neutral, that should seek to approach Great Britain and Ireland, the Atlantic coasts of Europe, or harbours in the Eastern Mediterranean, and to conduct those operations without regard to the established restrictions of international practice, and without regard to any considerations of humanity even, which might interfere with their object.

#### *War on all Commerce*

That policy was forthwith put into practice. It has now been in active operation for nearly four weeks. Its practical results have not been fully disclosed. The commerce of other neutral nations is suffering severely—not perhaps very much more severely than it was already suffering before February 1, when the new policy of the Imperial Government was put into operation. We have asked the co-operation of other neutral Governments to prevent these depredations, but I fear none of them has thought it wise to join us in any common course of action.

Our own commerce has suffered, and is suffering, rather in apprehension than in fact, rather because so many of our ships are timidly keeping to our home ports than because American ships have been sunk.

*United States Ships Sunk*

Two American vessels have been sunk—the *Housatonic* and the *Lyman M. Law*. The case of the *Housatonic*, which was carrying foodstuffs consigned to a London firm, was essentially like the case of the *William P. Frye*, in which it will be recalled that the German Government admitted its liability for damages, and the lives of the crew, as in the case of the *William P. Frye*, were safeguarded with reasonable care. The case of the *Lyman M. Law*, which was carrying lemon-box staves to Palermo, disclosed a ruthlessness of method which deserves grave condemnation, but was accompanied by no circumstance which might not have been expected at any time in connexion with the use of the submarine against merchantmen as the German Government has used it. In sum, therefore, the situation we find ourselves in with regard to the actual conduct of the Germans' submarine warfare against commerce and its effects upon our own ships and people is substantially the same that it was when I addressed you on February 3, except for the tying up of our shipping in our own ports because of the unwillingness of shipowners to risk their vessels at sea without insurance or adequate protection, and for the very serious congestion of our commerce which has resulted—a congestion which is growing rapidly more serious. This in itself might presently accomplish in effect what the new German submarine orders were meant to accomplish so far as we are concerned.

*No Overt Act as yet*

We can only say, therefore, that the overt act which we have ventured to hope that German commanders would, in fact, avoid, has not occurred.

But while this is happily true, it must be admitted that there have been certain additional indications and expressions of purpose on the part of the German press and the German authorities which have increased rather than lessened the impression that if our ships and our people are spared it will be because of fortunate circumstances or because the commanders of the German submarines which they may happen to encounter will exercise unexpected discretion and restraint rather than because of instructions under which those commanders are acting. It would be foolish to deny that the

situation is fraught with the gravest possibilities and dangers. No thoughtful man can fail to see that the necessity for definite action may come at any time, if we are in fact, and not in word merely, to defend our elementary rights as a neutral nation. It would be most imprudent to be unprepared. I cannot in such circumstances be unmindful of the fact that the expiration of the term of the present Congress is immediately at hand by constitutional limitation, and that it would in all likelihood require an unusual length of time to assemble and organize the Congress which is to succeed it.

#### *Increased Authority for the President*

I feel that I ought, in view of that fact, to obtain from you a full and immediate assurance of the authority which I may need at any moment to exercise. No doubt I already possess that authority, without special warrant of law, by the plain implication of my constitutional duties and powers; but I prefer in the present circumstances not to act upon a general implication. I wish to feel that the authority and power of Congress are behind me in whatever may become necessary for me to do. We are jointly the servants of the people, and must act together and in their spirit so far as we can divine and interpret it. No one doubts what it is our duty to do. We must defend our commerce and the lives of our people, in the midst of the present trying circumstances, with discretion, but with clear and steadfast purpose. Only the method and the extent remain to be chosen upon the occasion, if the occasion should indeed arise, since it has unhappily proved impossible to safeguard our neutral rights by diplomatic means against the unwarranted infringements they are suffering at the hands of Germany.

#### *Suggestion of an 'Armed Neutrality'*

There may be no recourse but to an armed neutrality, which we shall know how to maintain, and for which there is abundant American precedent. It is devoutly to be hoped that it will not be necessary to put armed forces anywhere into action. The American people do not desire it. Our desire is not different from theirs. I am sure they will understand the spirit in which I am now acting—the purpose I hold nearest my heart

and would wish to exhibit in everything I do. I am anxious that the people of the nations at war should also understand and not mistrust us. I hope I need give no further proofs or assurances than I have already given throughout nearly three years of anxious patience that I am a friend of peace, and mean to preserve it for America as long as I am able. I am not now proposing or contemplating war, or any steps that would lead to it. I merely request that you will accord me, by your own vote and the definite bestowal of means of authority, to safeguard in practice the right of a great people, who is at peace, and who is desirous of exercising none but the rights of peace, and to follow in pursuit of peace, in quietness and goodwill, rights recognized time out of mind by all the civilized nations of the world. No course of my choosing or of theirs will lead to war. War can come only by wilful acts and aggressions of others.

#### *Arming of Merchantmen*

You will understand why I can make no definite proposals or forecasts of action now, and must ask your supporting authority in the most general terms. The form in which action may become necessary cannot yet be foreseen. I believe the people will be willing to trust me to act with restraint and prudence in the true spirit of amity and good faith which they have themselves displayed throughout these trying months. It is in that belief that I request that you will authorize me to supply our merchant ships with defensive arms should that become necessary, and with means of using them, and to employ any other instrumentalities or methods that may be necessary and adequate to protect our ships and people in their legitimate peaceful pursuits on the seas.

#### *Insurance of War Risks*

I request also that you will grant me at the same time, along with the powers I ask, sufficient credit to enable me to provide adequate means of protection where they are lacking, including adequate insurance against present war risks. I have spoken of our commerce and the legitimate errands of our people on the seas, but you will not be misled regarding my main thought —a thought that lies beneath these phrases and gives them dignity and weight. It is not of material interest merely that

we are thinking. It is rather of fundamental human rights—the chief of all rights—life itself. I am thinking not only of the rights of Americans to go and come about their proper business by sea, but also of something much deeper and much more fundamental than that.

*The Rights of Humanity to be Maintained*

I am thinking of those rights of humanity without which there is no civilization. My thought is of those great principles of compassion and protection which mankind has sought to throw about human lives, the lives of non-combatants, the lives of men who are peacefully at work keeping the industrial processes of the world quick and vital, the lives of women and children and those who supply the labour which ministers to their sustenance. We are speaking of no selfish material rights, but of the rights which our hearts support, and whose foundation is that righteous passion for justice upon which all law, all structures alike of family, States, and mankind, must rest as upon the ultimate base of our existence and liberty. I cannot imagine any man with American principles at his heart hesitating to defend these things.

# HERR VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG

THE IMPERIAL GERMAN CHANCELLOR

IN THE REICHSTAG,<sup>1</sup> FEBRUARY 27, 1917, ON

SUPPLY AND THE WAR TAXES

GENTLEMEN,—While our soldiers out there hold the trenches under a storm of shot and shell and our U-boats cross and recross the seas, undaunted, while we at home have nothing, absolutely nothing else to work at except to produce guns and munitions, to grow foodstuffs and distribute them equitably, in the extreme tension of this struggle, the times make one demand upon us which overrides all political questions, foreign and domestic—the demand to fight and conquer. The overwhelming majority with which the Reichstag last week confirmed the war-credits, proclaims to all the world our irrevocable determination to go on until the enemy is ready to make peace.

## *The Terms of Peace*

Since the discussion of war aims has been permitted, much has been written in the press, many speeches have been delivered on the question, as to what the terms of peace are to be. Not long ago a searching discussion took place in the Prussian Chamber of Deputies, whether the terms should include any territorial acquisitions and in what these should consist. However vital these questions may be for our public, however deeply they may move us—and it is only right that they should move us deeply—I yet, for my part, should not consider myself justified in taking any part in such controversies. I cannot make promises or lay down any detailed formula for our peace terms. It would be idle for me to do so. Those who hold the reins of government in enemy countries have done this in plenty. They have given far-reaching assurances to one another, but all they have gained by this has been to entangle their peoples ever more deeply in the war. What I could say about our terms, about the goal towards which we are striving, I have said over and over again. We

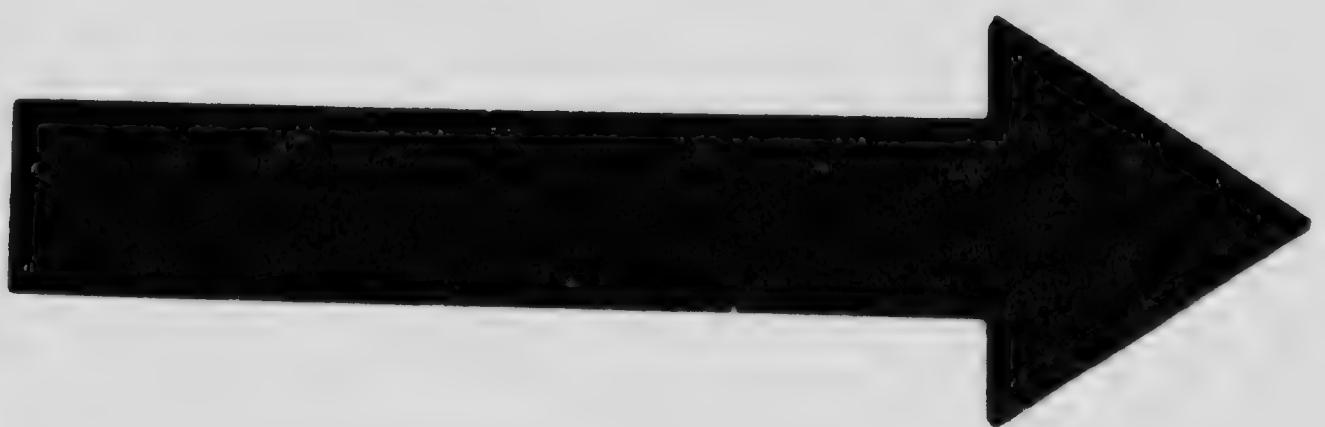
<sup>1</sup> Kindly translated from the *Berliner Tageblatt* by my friend Mr. R. N. Dehn, of the War Trade Intelligence Department.

desire to end the war by an enduring peace, which shall compensate us for the sufferings we have undergone, a peace which holds out to a Germany of unimpaired strength, guarantees for its existence and its future—that is our goal.

### *The Future of Domestic Politics*

As in the realm of external politics, so also at home great problems have presented themselves. I shall confine myself to general observations. It is not alone about war aims that views diverge, but about the shaping of domestic policy. Re-orientation : it is not a pretty word—I believe this is the first time I use it. It easily gives rise to false impressions, as though it were a matter of choice whether this re-orientation is to take place or not. No, gentlemen, a new era has dawned with a new people. This mighty war has created it. A generation which has at the innermost seat of sensation felt the shock of gigantic experiences ; a people of which a poet in field-grey has spoken the moving words—' Her poorest son was her truest son ' ; a nation which realizes a thousand times a day, that the sum of her resources can alone withstand and overcome the danger at her gates ; gentlemen, those are living forces which will allow no party programme, whether it comes from the Right or from the Left, to fetter or dismali them. When political rights are ordered anew, it is not a question of rewarding the people for what they have done. That is an unworthy thought.

It is a question only of finding the true political and constitutional expression of what this people has come to be. Gentlemen, we are faced at the end of this war with great political, moral, economic, and social problems. These problems can only be solved if all these forces, the continued strength of which alone can enable us to win the war, are, after peace is declared, given free play to work on, joyful and unhampered. It is no time for party cliques. It is the inner strength of the State which makes a demand, and that demand will be satisfied. Gentlemen, if any one should reply to this that after the War of Liberation a hundred years ago the hopes for the reconstitution of the German State on a democratic foundation were disappointed, he would be overlooking the fact that the times have changed. The times are past when Governments were swayed by Cabinet politics, when liberal currents were more



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or less cosmopolitan. In those days the national idea was in the minds of a few. To-day it has seized the whole nation. High, low, irrespective of rank or party, it has forged it into a single inseparable whole.

#### *The Value of our Monarchical Institution*

is recognized to-day among the Conservatives, and I also believe that thoughtful men who espouse the democratic cause will know the value of that principle. Such men as Briand and Lloyd George would have the world believe that their aim is to free Germany from Prussian militarism, to bestow with their own hands on the German people democratic institutions.

Now, gentlemen, if we are to be freed from anything we can look after that ourselves. And as for militarism we all know—before the war Mr. Lloyd George himself knew—that our geographical position is a perpetual reminder of Frederick the Great's saying, 'toujours en vedette.' This vigil cannot be kept more effectively than by institutions based on a pure monarchic foundation. It is kept most effectively of all by a monarchy which is rooted in the people, on the people's widespread strata, a monarchy deriving its strength from this inexhaustible spring—the love of free subjects. This and no other is the meaning, the essence of German Kaiserdom (*Kaisergedanken*), and the Prussian kingship. Gentlemen, I turn back from the public to the present events.

#### *The Peace Offer and its Rejection*

My last speech before the assembled Reichstag, on December 12, was devoted to the proposals of Germany and her allies to enter into peace negotiations. Our proposal met with plenty of sympathy among the neutrals. This found expression in the well-known *démarche* of the President of the United States, in the steps taken by the Swiss Confederacy and the Scandinavian kingdoms. Among our enemies, however, the obstinate jingoism of those in power was stronger than the people's cry for peace. Their reply was more brutal and impudent than any man of sense here in Germany or among the neutrals could have anticipated. The effects of this document of barbarian scorn and hate are as clear as daylight. Our alliances and our national determination are firmer, the German people

more united and resolute than ever. On our opponents alone rests the enormous load of guilt for the continued bloodshed ; on them falls the curse of suffering humanity ; it is they who brushed aside the proffered reconciliation.

### *The Submarine Blockade*

On the blockade to which we, together with Austria-Hungary, are subjecting England, France, and Italy, I addressed the House on January 31. To the Note with which we then proclaimed the blockade, we have received replies which contained reservations and protests. So far from shutting our eyes to the great difficulties which beset neutral shipping, we are doing our utmost to mitigate their effect. With this end in view we are trying, so far as lies in our power, to supply the neutral State countries with the raw materials they require, such as coal and iron. But we know, too, that in the last resort these difficulties are due to the brutal tyranny which England exercises on the seas. These shackles that are cast on all traffic on the high seas that is not British, we will and shall break through. We meet, as far as we can, such wishes of neutrals as are capable of fulfilment. But an immovable barrier is set in the way of these endeavours by our irrevocable determination to carry through the blockade at all costs. I am convinced that the time will come when the neutrals themselves will thank us for our firmness, for they too will benefit by the freedom of the seas for which we are all contending.

### *The Diplomatic Rupture with the United States*

As you know, the United States of America went one step farther than the European neutrals. On receiving our Note of January 31, President Wilson abruptly broke off diplomatic relations. As yet I have received no authentic information as to the reasons which led him to take this step. The late American Ambassador here in Berlin confined himself to informing the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the breaking off of relations and asking for his passports. This form of breaking off relations between two great empires, which had lived in peace with one another, is, I should think, without precedent in history. In the absence of an official document, I have to be content with an uncertain source of

information, namely, with the contents of President Wilson's message to Congress of February 3, as published by Reuter's Agency. According to Reuter, the President said that by our Note of January 31 the solemn promises given by our Note of May 4, 1916, were, with full knowledge, suddenly and without any warning withdrawn, that the Government of the United States had therefore no other alternative that was compatible with its dignity and honour than to take the course indicated in its Note of April 20, 1916, in the event of Germany being unwilling to abandon her U-boat methods.

*Germany's Ancient Friendship for America*

Gentlemen, if this line of argument should be authentic, then I should have to contradict it most emphatically. We have for over a century sedulously fostered friendly relations with America. We have, as Bismarck once expressed it, valued them as a legacy handed down to us from Frederick the Great. Both countries benefit from these relations. Since the beginning of the war things have changed on the other side of the water. As late as August 27, 1913, during the Mexican disturbance, President Wilson had declared in a solemn message to Congress that he believed he was following the highest tradition of international law in respect to neutrality, in forbidding all deliveries of arms and munitions to both belligerent parties in Mexico. A year later, this time in 1914, this practice was obviously no longer considered so highly. The shipments of munitions from America to the Entente have been prodigious, and while the right of American citizens to travel without let or hindrance to the Entente countries, and to trade freely with England and France across the battle-fields of the sea—even when that trade was paid for with precious German blood—while those rights, I say, were jealously watched over, it did not appear equally important to protect the rights of American citizens in relation to the Central Powers. It is true that they protested in certain instances against English breaches of international law, but they ended by making the best of them. Under these circumstances the reproach of lack of respect sounds strange indeed, and I must just as emphatically decline to admit the reproach that by the manner of our withdrawal of the assurances given in our Note of May 4, 1916, we took

liberties with the honour and dignity of the United States. That circumstances might arise in which our assurances would cease to be binding we had declared at the very outset, expressly and unequivocally.

#### *Germany's U-boat Policy*

I would ask you, gentlemen, to call to mind the conclusion of our Note of May 4, in which we agreed to observe the forms of cruiser-warfare in respect to U-boat warfare. The concluding words of the Note were these : ' In the struggle for her existence that has been forced upon Germany, neutrals cannot expect her in their interest to restrict herself in the use of effective weapons, whilst her opponents are allowed to use means contrary to international law to their hearts' content. Such a demand would be irreconcileable with the essence of neutrality. The German Government is convinced that the Government of the United States has no thought of making so unreasonable a demand. We base this assertion on the repeated declarations of the North American Government that it is determined to restore the freedom of the seas, by whichever of the belligerents it may have been violated. Accordingly the German Government sets out with the assumption that its new instructions to the Navy will, in the eyes of the United States as well, remove every existing obstacle which might prevent the co-operation offered in the Note of June 23, 1915, for the restoration of the freedom of the seas during the war, from being realized. We do not doubt that the Government of the United States will now emphatically demand and insist on the observation by the British Government of those rules of international law which were generally recognized before the war and which, moreover, were set out in the United States' Notes to England of December 28, 1914, and November 5, 1915. Should this step on the part of the United States not have the desired effect of obtaining recognition of the laws of humanity from all the belligerent nations, the German Government would be faced with a new situation and would have to reserve for itself full freedom of decision.'

#### *Reasons for Unrestricted U-boat Action*

On May 10 the Government of the United States acknowledged receipt of our Note of May 4. It then expressed the

opinion that we did not intend to make the new policy with regard to U-boat warfare, which we announced, in any way dependent on the result of negotiations between the American Government and any other Government. This was in such direct contradiction to what we had stated in our Note with a clearness that precluded the possibility of any misunderstanding, to the effect that no reply that we could have given could have in any way affected our respective standpoints. As to the conditions under which we claimed the recovery of our freedom of action, surely no one even in America can dispute that these conditions have long since been fulfilled. England has not raised the blockade of Germany. Far from it, indeed, she has been continually and ruthlessly tightening it. Our opponents have not been induced to regard the rules and dictates of humanity which prior to the war were universally observed. The freedom of the seas, which America, according to the express declaration of her Government, intended to restore in co-operation with us, has been still further undermined by our opponents, while America did nothing to prevent it. All that is *publici iuris*. Why, at the end of January England issued a new proclamation regarding the blockade in the North Sea, and May 4 is now nine months ago ! Could any one be surprised then, that on January 31 of this year we did not consider that the freedom of the seas had been restored, and drew our own conclusions accordingly ?

#### *Germany's Destruction of Neutral Lives*

Gentlemen, our enemies and those American circles which are ill disposed<sup>4</sup> to us, feel constrained to draw our attention to an important difference between our actions and those of England. England, they say, destroys principally material property which can be replaced, while Germany destroys human lives which are irreplaceable. Now, gentlemen, how is it that American lives never ran any danger from England ? Surely only because the neutrals, and America in particular, voluntarily submitted to England's instructions, and because in this way England was saved the necessity of using force to attain her ends.

I wonder what would have happened if the Americans had insisted on uninterrupted passenger and goods traffic to Ham-

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burg and Bremen? Had they done so, we should have been spared the painful impression that, according to the American view, subjection to England's power and control is compatible with neutrality, while the recognition of German means of defence is incompatible with neutrality.

Gentlemen, if we consider the whole development of our relations with America, the breaking off of diplomatic intercourse, the attempted mobilization of the neutrals against us in support of the American point of view, all these things do not bring the peace for which President Wilson also is striving, any nearer. They can only serve to fortify England in her desire to starve us. We regret the breach with a people which by its whole history seemed destined to be our comrade in arms, and not our opponent, in striving for our common ideals. But now that our straightforward offer of peace has only served to let loose all the war-fury of our enemies, there can be no going back for us, we can only go forward. Gentlemen, it was to be foreseen that England would represent the severer application of U-boat warfare as the greatest crime in history.

#### *England as Ruler of the Seas*

England believes herself to be the predestined ruler of the seas and at the same time the general benefactor of humanity as a whole. International law with its regulations for naval warfare was unconditionally binding on every other Power, but for England only so far as it might be compatible with her interests. Not long since, a member of the House of Peers saw that the policing of the seas was England's privilege and right. But who watches England in the execution of this task? Every opponent who refuses to bow to England's practice of extending or restricting her regulations according to her elastic political, military, and economic needs, is represented as the enemy of mankind. Prior to the war, when there was no danger of German U-boat warfare, things were different.

#### *The Submarine Weapon*

I am able to quote the utterance of an English authority on naval matters—Sir Percy Scott<sup>1</sup>—made shortly before the outbreak of war. It had been argued, against the statement that the future was with the submarine in naval warfare, that

<sup>1</sup> The facts of Sir Percy Scott's statement are set out in the foreword.

the submarine, owing to technical limitations, could not capture, but only destroy, and that the dictates of humanity forbade this. In his reply in *The Times* Sir Percy Scott writes as follows : 'Let us imagine this case. An island, which depends for its supplies of foodstuffs on imports from overseas, goes to war. Its adversary regards it as his task to cut off its imports. Accordingly he institutes a blockade of mines and submarines round the island and informs all neutrals that such a blockade has been instituted, and that if one of their ships approaches the island, it does so at its risk and under peril of destruction by the mines and submarines.' That is exactly our case ! And what is Sir Percy Scott's opinion of this ? Listen—' Such a proclamation would be perfectly in order, and if British or neutral ships took no heed of the blockade and tried to break it, it cannot be assumed that they were engaged on peaceful errands, and if they were sunk, this could not be regarded as a relapse into ruthlessness or piracy.' *The Cologne Gazette*, when reprinting *The Times* article on June 14, 1915, hit the nail on the head when it remarked, 'If the position with regard to submarine warfare to-day had been the reverse of what it is, the whole of England with one voice would be speaking as Sir Percy Scott spoke then.' I repeat in reply to the campaign of calumny which England is prosecuting all over the world, and I underline it once again, 'Our present U-boat war is a reply to the hunger-blockade to which England has subjected us since the outbreak of war.' The English authorities cherished the fond hope that the war would not cost them very dear, that, as had so often been the case in the past, her Allies on the Continent would do the work for England, while England confined herself to starving Germany into capitulation by means of her proud navy without herself losing any men. The prescription was not a new one for England.

#### *England and th. Boer War*

Let me remind you of the notorious concentration camps, where England dragged the wives and children of the gallant Boers and submitted them to the most inhuman treatment with the express purpose of reducing the powers of resistance of the men on the field by their sufferings. As was admitted in the English Parliament, this measure, which will always be

a blot on the name of England, had exactly the opposite effect. It resulted in increasing the resistance of the Boers and therefore had the effect of prolonging the war. By a strange irony on the part of history, the present Prime Minister, Lloyd George, who now does not know where to stop in his fight against German barbarism, is the same Lloyd George who at the time stated in the English Parliament that 15,000 to 16,000 innocent women and children had fallen victims to English cruelty. For example, the mortality among children under 12 years of age in the concentration camps was, according to his statement,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Chamberlain, the English Colonial Secretary of those days, admitted, while attempting to defend the Government, that the infant mortality in the camps had, at times, even exceeded 55 per cent. This state of affairs was the result of a carefully thought-out policy of starvation, in accordance with which these unfortunate women and children received insufficient nourishment. Do not imagine that supplies available were insufficient : it was intentional. And in the same way sanitation was completely neglected. These data I have derived not from any prejudiced propaganda, but from the official report on the debate in the English Lower Chamber in which these facts were established.

Now, gentlemen, what England was then practising on a small scale, she wished to practise in the present war on a large scale. In the Boer War it was a question of 150,000 women and children, of whom, according to the statements of Lloyd George, 50,000 to 60,000 fell victims to the barbarism of the English method of waging war. To-day the whole German people, with its close on 70,000,000 souls, with its women and children, with its sick and its cripples, was to be starved and the German people was thereby to be forced to capitulate. That was England's intention from the outset. Those were the means by which victory was to be attained, a victory which could not be gained by arms. It was England which from the outset made this war not a war of armies, but of peoples. And after England had done this, after the enemy had met our honourable peace offer with scornful contempt, we, in our determination to protect ourselves, had to fall back on Goethe's saying, 'A rough block of wood needs a rough wedge to split it.' England seems to recognize the danger with which she is faced

owing to the U... Lloyd George's speech confirms this. It is true the English Government consoles the people with the promise that the U-boats will ere long be mastered. Well, gentlemen, we shall see.

### *The Success of the U-boat Campaign*

Meanwhile I am able to state that the successes up to date of the U-boat war, as conducted since February 1, have far exceeded the expectation of the Fleet. Of course I can give you no final figures. Our blockade is scarcely four weeks old, and in these four weeks is included the period of grace which we allowed to neutral vessels, which, being afloat, could not be warned in time. We are still without reports from a large number of our U-boats. Those boats whose reports we have received have been highly successful. Our enemies, of course, admit only part of their losses. When everything is considered, then, the figures which we are in a position to publish in the press up to date, figures which comprise only part of the ships actually sunk, show that we have reason to be more than satisfied with the results achieved. The reports propagated by the enemy with regard to ships which have passed the prohibited zone (*Sperre*)—reports which are intended as a sop for the public—are no disappointment for us. As every one knows we never proclaimed a blockade, but only imposed prohibited zones in which every ship would have to reckon with the possibility of immediate attack. It is only natural, therefore, that some ships do escape this danger. This does not affect the total result achieved, partly by the sinking of ships, partly by the interruption of neutral shipping, which is already widely in evidence. Thanks to the incomparable dash of our U-boats, we are fully justified in looking forward with confidence to the future developments of the war at sea. The results achieved are likely to increase as time goes on, and they will have an ulterior influence on the enemy's capacity to carry on the war.

One word more, gentlemen, in conclusion. After our peace offer had been declined, our Emperor, in his message of January 12, stated that he was confident that the strength of every German would be doubled in holy wrath at the greed for power and the lust for destruction again evidenced by those in control of the enemy. That the Emperor had reason for this confidence

the German people has proved in every section all along the line, in fighting, working, and enduring. We have had a hard winter behind us, particularly the poorer classes. The supply of foodstuffs and fuel has been rendered more difficult still by the restriction of railway traffic. But the heroism of our women and children, the spirit of unflinching patriotism which is abroad, has already put to shame the English plan of starving us.

#### *The Military Position*

has hardly changed since I last spoke. On every side our fronts are stronger than before, and our brave soldiers look confidently up to leaders to whom victory is a habit. Full of indignation we stand shoulder to shoulder, fortified by the refusal of our offer of peace. Ready for anything on the land fronts, thanks to the scientific leadership of our higher command and the invincible toughness of our troops; unconquered, too, on the sea front and armed for submarine warfare many times better than a year ago ; we look forward to the coming months with great confidence. Our army in the field and our army at home are inspired by the same unbending will not to suffer disgrace by the sacrifice of their liberty. This will, proved and hardened a thousandfold in death and danger, makes us unconquerable and leads us on to victory !

## THE OVERSEA DOMINIONS AND THE GREAT WAR

SIR ROBERT BORDEN and Lieutenant-General Smuts were the chief guests at a luncheon at the House of Commons, given on April 2, 1917, by the Empire Parliamentary Association to the Oversea Ministers attending the Imperial War Conference. Indian delegates to the Conference were also present, but as they were to be entertained separately at a future date, they did not take part in the speech-making.

### SIR ROBERT BORDEN'S SPEECH

#### *The Dominions' Effort*

Little more than twenty months have elapsed since I last addressed you. We had some realization, but hardly an adequate conception even then of the tremendous task which still lay before us in this war. In these islands you have risen splendidly to the need ; we of the Dominions have striven also to do our part. I then reminded you that 350,000 men had joined the Colours in the oversea nations. To-day I can tell you that not fewer than one million men in those Dominions have taken up arms for the Empire. The Canadian Expeditionary Force in Europe then numbered 75,000 ; to-day I am proud to tell you that Canada has sent forth to aid the Allied cause more than 325,000 men. Our total enlistments exceed 400,000, and in the Canadian Expeditionary Force alone more than 300,000 men have left the shores of our Dominion. Their achievement under the sternest test has been splendidly worthy of the traditions which are their heritage.

There is not time nor is this the occasion to dwell upon the phases of the war since my last visit to England. The most recent had its inception on the first day of February last in the attempt to starve into submission the people of these islands by the ruthless sinking of all ships entering a wide ocean area round the United Kingdom. I am wholly confident that this attempt will fail, but I am equally confident that to ensure such failure the people of the Empire, and especially the people

of these islands, must realize that the peril is a substantial one. It must be met with a spirit which will not shrink from timely self-denial in order to avoid future need, which will command the whole-hearted and united service of the nation to serve its existence, which will consecrate the energy of a united Empire to one supreme purpose. Waste in time of peace is a sin; in this time of national stress and danger it is a crime. I speak of waste in the broadest sense—waste of food, waste of time, waste of opportunity, waste of labour. A Government can do much, but it cannot do everything. The highest national achievement depends upon the self-denial, the devotion, the resolution, and the strong purpose of the people.

### *The Enemy's Last Throw*

I speak in no despondent mood, but as one disposed to face realities. The enemy are staking everything upon this last throw of the dice. All their energies are being concentrated upon this year's campaign, whether on land or on sea. Any flagging of our spirit, any lack of effort—disastrous at any time—would be fatal now. Consider any sacrifice or self-denial, however stern, which the need may impose upon those at home, how do these compare with the privation, the danger, the suffering, and, too often, the supreme sacrifice of those who hold the lines in France or elsewhere in the great theatres of war? If any of us should chance to be despondent let him go for confidence to the men in the trenches. If for a moment he lacks heart, let him go to the wounded in the hospitals for courage. If we seek a standard for the nation's spirit, let us remember the discipline and heroism of the men who lined up on the deck of the *Tyndareus* when she was sinking.

### *German Desperation*

The German people are fighting with desperation under the belief, engendered and fostered by their military autoocracy, that we seek to crush Germany and to terminate her national existence. No such purpose ever was or could be in the mind of the British people. It is impossible to crush in that sense a nation of seventy millions. Beyond comparison Germany was at the beginning of the war the most powerful military State in the world's history. Any idea of successful aggression against

her was unthinkable. Confident in that strength, the German nation, following blindly the behests of militarism, entered upon this war for world-domination. For the health of Germany's soul her people must be taught before it ends that military aggression is neither a legitimate nor a profitable business enterprise ; that world-domination is impossible ; that treaties are sacred ; that the public conscience of the world will not permit the rape of small, weak nations ; will not tolerate the horrible methods of barbarity which have characterized the passage of the German armies and their occupancy of conquered territory ; and, finally, that there is a world-conscience which commands and can arouse a force sufficient to subdue any nation that runs amok. The lesson must be thoroughly learned by the German people, or the Allied nations will have taken up arms in vain. Let Germany so set her house in order that a change of ideal and of purpose can be relied on ; let her make reparation for the evil she has wrought ; let her give adequate guarantees for the future. Thus, but not otherwise, can she have peace. For this, but not to crush her, the Allied nations are fighting.

#### *Plans for the Future*

We have gathered together here from the ends of the earth to take counsel with you of the Mother Land upon the needs of the situation, so as better to co-ordinate our common effort and consummate our common purpose. When first I spoke to you, in 1912, I took leave to put forward certain views respecting future constitutional relations. Two years ago I emphasized the same considerations without dwelling upon them. The purpose which I then had at heart still remains steadfast. It may be that in the shadow of the war we do not clearly realize the measure of recent constitutional development. I shall not attempt to anticipate any conclusion which may be reached by the Imperial War Conference now sitting in London, a conference embracing India, now for the first time taking her place at the national council of Empire, as well as all the great Dominions except Australia, whose absence is deeply regretted. Except with regard to India, the summoning of that conference does not mark a new stage of constitutional development. Its present duty is to consider and, where necessary, to determine general questions of common concern which in some cases

have an intimate relation to the war and to the conditions which will arise upon its conclusion.

### *The Imperial War Cabinet*

Without further reference to the Imperial War Conference I address myself to the constitutional position which has arisen from the summoning of an Imperial War Cabinet. The British Constitution is the most flexible instrument of government ever devised. It is surrounded by certain statutory limitations, but they are not of a character to prevent the remarkable development to which I shall allude. The office of Prime Minister, thoroughly recognized by the gradually developed conventions of the Constitution, although entirely unknown to the formal enactments of the law, is invested with a power and authority which under new conditions, demanding progress and development, are of inestimable advantage. The recent exercise of that great authority has brought about an advance which may contain the germ and define the method of constitutional development in the immediate future. It is only within the past few days that the full measure of that advance has been consummated.

For the first time in the Empire's history there are sitting in London two Cabinets, both properly constituted and both exercising well-defined powers. Over each of them the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom presides. One of them is designated as the 'War Cabinet', which chiefly devotes itself to such questions touching the prosecution of the war as primarily concern the United Kingdom. The other is designated as the 'Imperial War Cabinet', which has a wider purpose, jurisdiction, and personnel. To its deliberations have been summoned representatives of all the Empire's self-governing Dominions. We meet there on terms of equality under the presidency of the First Minister of the United Kingdom; we meet there as equals, although Great Britain presides, *primus inter pares*. Ministers from six nations sit around the council board, all of them responsible to their respective Parliaments and to the people of the countries which they represent. Each nation has its voice upon questions of common concern and highest importance as the deliberations proceed; each preserves unimpaired its perfect autonomy, its self-government, and the

responsibility of its Ministers to their own electorate. For many years the thought of statesmen and students in every part of the Empire has centred around the question of future constitutional relations ; it may be that now, as in the past, the necessity imposed by great events has given the answer.

#### *Its Objects*

The Imperial War Cabinet, as constituted to-day, has been summoned for definite and specific purposes, publicly stated, which involve questions of the most vital concern to the whole Empire. With the constitution of that Cabinet a new era has dawned and a new page of history has been written. It is not for me to prophesy as to the future significance of these pregnant events ; but those who have given thought and energy to every effort for full constitutional development of the over-sea nations may be pardoned for believing that they discern therein the birth of a new and greater Imperial Commonwealth.

#### GENERAL SMUTS'S SPEECH

General Smuts said : I feel on this occasion that South Africa is not putting her best foot forward. I could wish that General Botha was here to-day to be bracketed with Sir Robert Borden in reply to the toast of the Dominions, but unfortunately he could not be here. He is bearing a burden in South Africa which no other man can bear, and it is a misfortune in a certain sense that I have to take the place of my right hon. friend. We feel profoundly grateful to you, Mr. Long, for the references you have made to the effort of the Dominions in this war. No doubt it is a great effort. But I must frankly confess that what has impressed me far more profoundly in this war is the effort and the spirit of the United Kingdom.

#### *Britain's Development for Peace*

When we consider that this nation was not meant for a war of annexation, that it was a nation built on peace institutions and founded on a peaceful basis, and not intended for such a crisis as has overwhelmed the world now, I say that the effort that has been made by this nation is one which almost surpasses the imagination of the world. That effort, I think, and the spirit which is even greater than the effort, are the pledge

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of certain success in the future. I am as sure as I can be of anything that this spirit which the British nation has developed is such that all will be well in the end, however hard it may be before the end comes.

With regard to the Dominions—we have listened to the very eloquent and wise speech which Sir Robert Borden has made, and it is certainly a marvellous effort which has been made by the Dominions.

#### *The Effort of the Dominions*

Is it not a wonderful thing that the Dominion of Canada by herself has made an effort almost equal, if not quite equal, to that made by Great Britain in the Boer War? Here you have an outlying nation of the Empire, which has raised almost half a million men in the course of this war. I am credibly informed that in proportion to her wide population, the effort of Australia has been almost more magnificent. As regards the Empire of India I cannot speak, but I can say, as one who has commanded thousands of Indian troops in one of our campaigns, that I never wish to command more loyal, braver, and better troops. The Indian troops who are now breaking up the Turkish Empire in Mesopotamia are making a contribution to the war which should never be forgotten. New Zealand, the most British of all the Dominions, has made a magnificent effort; with a small population of a little more than a million, she has raised approximately 100,000 men. This is an effort of which we might all well be proud. The same applies to Newfoundland.

#### *South Africa's Position*

What can I modestly say about South Africa? We started this war with an internal convulsion in the country. Unlike any other part of the Empire, we first had to set our own house in order. That was done. We secured peace and quiet in South Africa, and to-day the German flag, except in a small and fever-ridden district, is not flying south of the Equator. You have to remember—I do not want to be parochial, but the case of South Africa is significant for our whole position in this war—we must remember that, unlike the other Dominions, this work was done by a Dominion the majority of whose white population is not British but Dutch. You have to remember that

only fifteen years ago a very large portion of this population was locked in deadly conflict with the British Empire. And when you bear in mind these facts and see what has been achieved, I think you will agree with me that South Africa has done her share, and more than her share.

How was this done? Here I come to the wider issue. It was done because the Boer War of 1899-1902 was supplemented, was complemented, or compensated by one of the wisest political settlements ever made in the history of this nation. I hope that when in future you draw up a calendar of Empire-builders you will not forget the name of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. He was not, either intellectually or politically, a superman; but he was a wise man with profound feeling and profound political instinct, and he achieved a work in South Africa, by one wise act of statesmanship, which has already borne, and will continue to bear, the most far-reaching results in the history of this Empire.

This completed what was begun in the Boer War, and it switched South Africa again on to the right track, and the British Empire again on to the right track, because, after all, the British Empire is not founded on might or force, but on moral principles—on principles of freedom, equality, and equity. It is these principles which we stand for to-day as an Empire in this mighty struggle. Our opponent, the German Empire, has never learned that lesson yet in her short history. She still believes that might is right—that a military machine is sufficient to govern the world. She has not yet realized that ultimately all victories are moral, and that even the political government of the world is a moral government.

#### *Justice, not Militarism, rules the World*

The fundamental issue in this struggle in which we are engaged to-day is that the government of the world is not military, and it cannot be brought about by a military machine, but by the principles of equity, justice, fairness, and equality, such as have built up this Empire.

You see the effects of this already. Germany started enormously strong and preponderant in military strength over the world. What have we seen? Simply because we have a just and good cause, and simply because she has been trying to hack

her way through in a military sense, one country after another has dropped away from her. Two of her own treaty nations have dropped away from her, and to-day, almost all over the world, you will find the nations coming together against her. America has not yet declared war. Nobody knows what America may do, but I say that if America does not go into this war to-day, she will go in to-morrow, because the German attitude will force her sooner or later into open conflict. That is what Germany has achieved by the principle for which she is fighting. I am sure, if we continue to found our issue on those high principles that have actuated us so far through the history of the world, the end is certain and Germany is already defeated. Morally and politically she is already defeated, and all that remains now is the final issue on the field of battle.

#### *A Serious Position*

I do not hide from myself that the position is a grave one—that the Central Empires are an enormously strong military combination, and when I speak of ultimate victory, I do not hide from myself that we have hard work in front of us and that there are difficult times ahead for us. There is no doubt, after the long time the war has lasted—almost three years—and the exhaustion which is overtaking Central Europe, that they cannot continue much longer and that by the autumn that is now before them they will probably make their maximum military effort. They are flouting the opinion of the world in a way they have never done before, and in a way which suggests that they must try hard at any cost to achieve some result this summer.

#### *The Submarine Campaign*

As to the submarine campaign, I am fully convinced that that campaign is not going to settle this war. At the best it is, as it were, a raid on our wide Empire communications. The raids will be severe from time to time, and will inconvenience us very seriously, but they will not lead to our defeat. No raid on lines of communications ever yet led to the defeat of any Empire in the world. This summer I think we shall probably see the submarine effort on which Germany is relying fail in its intention, and then, earlier than many of us think, we shall hear of peace again. As Sir Robert Borden has assured

us, this nation is not inspired by any vengeful feeling, by any desire to destroy the German nation. We are actuated by higher motives. We are not going to decline to a lower level of mere vengefulness and hatred. I am sure the nation will make a wise settlement, not only in its own interests, but in the interests of the whole of Europe.

#### *The Future Constitution of the Empire*

On the future constitution of the Empire I do not want to speak at any length. I do not think this is the time or that it is necessary to do so, but I think one word of caution should be expressed. A great deal of political thinking on this difficult and most important of all subjects has already been done in the United Kingdom, and a great literature is growing up around it in this country. Let me give you one word of warning. In thinking of this matter, do not try to think of existing political institutions which have been evolved in the course of European developments. The British Empire is a much larger and more diverse problem than anything we have seen hitherto, and the sort of Constitution we read about in books, the sort of political alphabet which has been elaborated in years gone by, does not apply and would not solve the problems of the future. We should not follow precedents, but make them. I feel sure that in the coming years when this problem is in process of solution—because it will never be finally and perfectly solved—you will find our political thought will be turned into quite new channels and will not follow what has been done anywhere else either in the old world or the new, because, after all, we are built on freedom.

#### *The Daughter Nations*

We see growing up before us a great number of strong free nations all over the Empire. Nobody wants to limit the power of self-government. No single man outside a lunatic asylum wants to force these young nations into any particular mould. All that we want is the maximum of freedom and liberty, the maximum of self-government for the young nations of the Empire, and machinery that will keep all these nations together in the years which are before them. I am sure, if we disabuse our minds of precedents and preconceived ideas, we shall

evolve, in the course of years, the institutions and machinery that will meet our difficulties. It is a great honour to me to have had the privilege to address you here. I am still full of courage. Even as an optimist I am encouraged and inspired by the spirit which I have seen in this island since I came here, and I think that that, even more than anything else, is a pledge of the victory which lies before us.

## MR. WILSON'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

APRIL 3, 1917

### THE UNITED STATES TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE ENTENTE

#### *An Extraordinary Session*

I CALLED Congress in Extraordinary Session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right constitutionally nor permissible I should assume the responsibility of making.

#### *German Submarine Policy*

On February 3 last .. officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after February 1 it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law and humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland, or the western coasts of Europe, or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its under-sea craft in conformity with its promise then given us that passenger boats should not be sunk and due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care would be taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats.

The precautions then were meagre and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed.

#### *The Last Vestige of Restraint Gone*

The new policy swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, character, cargo, cargo desti-

nation, or errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning, without thought of help or mercy for those on board vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships, ships carrying relief to sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though provided with a safe conduct through the prescribed areas by the German Government itself and distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, were sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion.

The principle of international law had its origin in an attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas where no nation had the right of dominion, where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up—with meagre enough results indeed, after all has been accomplished—always with a clear view at least of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.

#### *International Law Swept Aside*

This minimum the German Government swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity, and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except those which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity, all respect of the understanding supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world.

I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants—men, women, and children—engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate.

#### *Germans now 'Hostes Humani Generis'*

Property can be paid for : the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German warfare against commerce is warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk and American lives taken in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way.

There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all

mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with the moderation of counsel and temperateness of judgement befitting our character and motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical-might nation, but only a vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

#### *Arming Merchantmen for Self-defence*

When I addressed Congress on February 26 last I thought it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against the unlawful violence; but armed neutrality now appears impracticable, because submarines are, in effect, outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping. It is impossible to defend ships against their attacks, as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers which are visible craft when giving chase upon the open sea.

#### *Dealt With on Sight*

It is common prudence in such circumstances—grim necessity, indeed—to endeavour to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all.

The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in defence of rights which no modern publicist ever before questioned.

#### *German Counter-threat*

An intimation has been conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of the law, and subject to be dealt with as pirates.

Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at the best in such circumstances. In the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual. It is likely to produce what it was meant to prevent. It is practically certain to draw us into war, without either the rights or effectiveness of belligerents.

*United States must Fight*

There is one choice we cannot make and are incapable of making. We will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored and violated.

The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are not common wrongs. They cut to the very root of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn event and the tragic character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare that the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be, in fact, nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States.

That it formally accept the status of a belligerent, which is thus thrust upon it.

And that it take immediate steps, not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defence, but also to exert all its power and to employ its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

*To Co-operate with the Entente Powers*

What this involves is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable co-operation in council with the Governments now at war with Germany, and as incident thereto an extension to those Governments of the most liberal financial credits in order that our resources may, as far as possible, be added to theirs.

It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country, to supply materials of war, to serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant yet most economical and most efficient way possible.

It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects, but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines.

*Half a Million Men to be Raised*

It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war of a force of 500,000 men who should, in my opinion, be chosen

upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also of the authorization of subsequent additional increment of equal force so soon as may be needed and can be handled in training.

It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the Government, sustained, I hope, so far as can equitably be sustained, by the present generation, by well-conceived taxation. I say sustained as far as may be equitable by taxation because it seems to me it would be unwise to base the credits which will now be necessary entirely upon money borrowed.

It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people, as far as we may, against the very serious hardships and evil which are likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

#### *Supplies for Allies to be Maintained*

In carrying out the measures whereby these things will be accomplished, we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our military forces with the duty—for it will be a very practical duty—of supplying nations already at war with Germany with materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. They are in the field. We should help them in every way to be effective there.

I take the liberty of suggesting through the several executive departments of the Government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned.

I hope it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the Government upon which the responsibility of conducting war and safeguarding the nation will most directly fall.

#### *The Nation's Motives*

While we do these things—these deeply momentous things—let us make it very clear to all the world what our motives and our objects are.

My own thought has not been driven from the habitual normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months. I don't believe the thought of the nation has been altered or

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clouded by them. I have exactly the same things in mind now as I had when I addressed the Senate on January 22, the same that I had in mind when I addressed Congress on February 2 and February 26.

### *To Fight for Democracies and Peace*

Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish autocratic power, and to set up amongst really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and action as will henceforth ensure the observances of these principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved, and the freedom of its peoples and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic Governments, backed by organized force, which is controlled wholly by their will and not by the will of their people.

We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and responsibility for wrong-doing shall be observed among nations and their Governments that are observed among individual citizens of civilized States.

### *Autocracy the Sole Foe*

We have not quarrelled with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon, as wars used to be determined upon in the old unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or little groups of ambitious men, who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools.

### *The Aim of the Military Oligarchy*

Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbour States with spies or set in course an intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which would give them an opportunity to

strike and make a conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked only under cover, where no one has a right to ask questions.

#### *Plans of Deception*

Cunningly contrived plans of deception or impression carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by the partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic Government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. There must be a league of honour and partnership of opinion.

Intrigue would eat its vitals away. Plottings by inner circles, who would plan what they would and render an account to no one, would be corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to the common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.

#### *Russia's Blow for Freedom*

Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always, in fact, democratic at heart in all vital habits, in her thought, and in all intimate relations of her people that spoke of their natural instinct and their habitual attitude towards life.

The autoocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as it was in the reality of its power, it was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose, and now it has been shaken and the great, generous Russian people have been added in all their naïve majesty and might to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a league of honour.

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One of the things that has served to convince us that Prussian autoocracy was not, and could never be, our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of Government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of council, and our peace within and without our industries and our commerce. Indeed, it is now evident that spies were here even before the war began.

#### *German Ambassador's Guilt*

It is, unhappily, not a matter of conjecture but fact, proved in our courts of justice, that intrigues which more than once came perilously near disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States. Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them, because we know that their source lay not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people towards us—who were, no doubt, as ignorant of them as ourselves—but only in selfish designs of a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing, but they played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience.

#### *German Intrigue with Mexico*

That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted Note to the German Minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence. We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a Government, following such methods, we can never have a friend, and that in the presence of its organized power always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world.

We are now about to accept the gage of battle with this natural foe to liberty, and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power.

*The Rights of the People*

We are glad now that we see facts with no veil of false pretence about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world, for the liberation of its peoples—the German peoples included—the rights of nations great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and obedience.

The world must be safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon trusted foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquests and no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves and no material compensation for sacrifices we shall freely make.

We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind, and shall be satisfied when these rights are as secure as fact and the freedom of nations can make them.

Just because we fight without rancour and without selfish objects, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion, and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and fair play we profess to be fighting for.

*Austria-Hungary has not attacked the United States*

I have said nothing of Governments allied with the Imperial Government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our rights and our honour. The Austro-Hungarian Government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified endorsement and acceptance of reckless submarine warfare, adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German Government, and it has, therefore, not been possible for this Government to receive Count Tarnowski, the Ambassador recently accredited to this Government by Austria-Hungary, but that Government has not actually engaged in warfare against the citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty for the present, at least, of postponing the discussion of our relations with the authorities in Vienna.

We enter this war only when clearly forced into it, because there are no other means of defending our rights.

*No Enmity against the People of Germany*

It will be easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without

animus; not in enmity towards a people, or with a desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible Government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and right, and is running amok.

We are, let me say again, sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as an early re-establishment of intimate relations to our mutual advantage. However hard it may be for them for the time being to believe this, it is spoken from our hearts.

We have borne with their present Government through all these bitter months because of that friendship, exercising patient forbearance which otherwise would have been impossible.

#### *The German Population of the United States*

We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live amongst us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it towards all who, in fact, are loyal to their neighbours and to the Government in the hour of test. They are most of them as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of different mind and purpose.

#### *Disloyalty will be Repressed*

If there should be disloyalty it will be dealt with with the firm hand of stern repression, but if it lifts its head at all it will lift it only here and there, and without countenance except from the lawless and malignant few.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great and peaceful people into war—into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars.

#### *Right more Precious than Peace*

Civilization itself seems to be in the balance, but right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things

which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for the universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as will bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

To such a task we can dedicate our lives, our fortunes—everything we are, everything we have—with the pride of those who know the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and might for the principles that gave her birth and the happiness and peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

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## LORD ROBERT CECIL,

ON

### NO IMPERIALISTIC CONQUEST OR AGGRANDIZEMENT

#### *The Debate*

IN the House of Commons on May 16, 1917, Mr. Snowden, a Labour member, on the motion for the third reading of the Consolidated Fund (No. 3) Bill, moved to add, in lieu of a part of the original motion, the words 'this House welcomes the declaration of the new Democratic Government of Russia, repudiating all proposals for Imperialistic conquest and aggrandizement, and calls on His Majesty's Government to issue a similar declaration on behalf of the British democracy, and to join with the Allies in restating . . . . . terms in conformity with the Russian Declaration.'

It will be seen that in point of fact, though the House manifested the greatest sympathy with our Russian Allies, the mover of the amendment had no following in the House of Commons, and it seems highly improbable that he represents any considerable body of opinion in the British Empire, even outside the House of which he is a member. One or two extracts from his speech must be given, as they afford the pegs on which Lord Robert Cecil's observations hang. The member for Blackburn criticized the old Russian order, condemning it as frankly Imperialistic.

He went on to say that 'we were made publicly aware near the end of last year by a declaration made in the Russian Duma of the fact, of which some of us were fairly well convinced before, that for some time a secret compact had existed between Great Britain and Russia conceeding to Russia, in the event of an Allied victory, certain territory, including Constantinople. When that declaration was made we heard the first rumblings of the coming revolution. It became quite evident that this frankly announced policy of Russia's Imperialistic aims in the war was not accepted by the Democratic representatives in the Duma.'

After telling the House in positive terms the views of all the democracies in Russia and France, he said : ' In Italy since the outbreak of the war, or since Italy's participation in the war, the Italian Socialist movement, which is particularly strong, has been saved from acute division. The Italian Socialist movement is practically united in its opposition to the war.' The suggestion which the hon. member wished to put forward was that the British Government should join in sending representatives to an International Socialist Conference at which the causes of war could be removed. Amongst such causes were cited 'the ambitions of ruling dynasties, or of militarist castes, race, religion' ; but he explained that 'in these modern times, the most fruitful cause of war is commercial competition, the desire for new markets, the use of foreign policy and diplomacy as a means of aiding interested financial groups in the different nations'. The Conference, of which Mr. Snowden was so enthusiastic, 'would speak with one voice on the desirability of International Free Trade. It would repudiate the old doctrine of the balance of power and declare for the abolition of the method of secret diplomacy.'

After two speeches from the supporters of the mover of the amendment, Mr. Whyte, member for Perth, made an able speech in which he showed something of the hollowness of Mr. Snowden's arguments. Another member for a Scottish constituency followed on the same side, and then Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, member for Leicester, spoke on the same side as the mover of the amendment. But he adopted a very different tone. He was by no means so sure of the fullness of his own knowledge about the conditions prevailing abroad as was the member for Blackburn. For example, he said : ' I quite agree with the hon. member who preceded me that he would be a very rash man, and I think a very ignorant man, who would say too much about the Russian Revolution.' He went on to say that 'great mischief had been done in this country to the Revolution by certain organs of the press. Much suspicion exists in Petrograd as to the policy of this country, and British opinion has been much misrepresented . . . the effect of it all is this : if we cannot establish a complete sympathy between ourselves and Russia we are facing the grave danger of Russia making a separate, and an independent, peace with

Germany.' Then he spoke of the internal danger in Russia--of the fact that there are at the present moment in Russia forces making for internal disruption. He concluded by a reference to the International Socialist Conference, and ridiculed the suggestion that these are mere German wire-pullings. The Stockholm Conference would be presided over by Mr. Branting, of whom Mr. MacDonald said that 'of all leaders of political parties in the neutral States of Europe, Mr. Branting has been most loyal to the Allied cause.' Before he sat down, he admitted that the circumstances of the debate were very unfortunate, it being awkward to move an amendment to the third reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill, and he asked the House not to examine with microscopic exactness the words of the motion, appealing to the House to settle this war in the same way as the South African situation had been straightened up.

It will be seen from the foregoing that, though Lord Robert Cecil came down to the House with a general outline of the case to which it was his duty to reply, he can have had no idea of the specific points with which he would have to deal. His speech was in a sense impromptu, and in that respect stands in a different category from any of the others which are included in this little volume.

### LORD ROBERT CECIL'S SPEECH

The speech to which we have just listened [that of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, member for Leicester] was, if I may say so without impertinence, couched in a tone which was well fitted to the gravity of the occasion, and was certainly open to no criticism so far as its tone and expression were concerned from any one sitting on this bench.

#### *The Unfortunate effect of the Amendment*

The hon. member began his speech by saying that the object of this amendment was to get rid of suspicion in the mind of the Russian Council of Workmen. I quite recognize the difficulties raised by the forms of the House, but the hon. member will recognize that it is a little doubtful whether to put down an amendment to the third reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill, an amendment which must be rejected if the business of the country is to be carried on, is really a very good way of allaying that

suspicion. Here is an amendment couched in words, as the hon. member has told the House, taken from pronouncements by the Council of Workmen. It must be rejected by the House, and it may cause some difficulty in Russia when that fact becomes to be known. I do not believe that there is anybody in the House who would seriously quarrel with the amendment as explained by the hon. member for Leicester [Mr. Ramsay MacDonald]. We, at any rate, have constantly said—my right hon. friend opposite [Mr. Asquith] has said so on more than one occasion—that we entered upon this war with no scheme—what is it?—of Imperialistic conquest or aggrandizement. There was no such idea in the mind of any single British citizen when we entered upon this war, and though I am not wishing to descend to verbal criticism, I am not quite clear what is meant by the exact phrase of Imperialistic conquest and aggrandizement. I do not think it would be going too far to say that at the present stage of the war it is equally true that no one desires anything of that kind.

#### *The Disease of Omniscience*

I am bound to deal with this amendment not only as expounded by the hon. member for Leicester, but also as expounded by the hon. member for Blackburn [Mr. Snowden], who introduced it, and who, as the mover, as indeed was quite proper, made the more important and more elaborate speech. If the object of the hon. member was to conciliate opposition and promote agreement in this House, I cannot say that I think the phrases and the tone which he adopted were those which were precisely most calculated to achieve his object. In particular, the hon. member, if he will allow me to say so, was perhaps afflicted with the disease of omniscience during the greater part of his speech.

#### *The Italian Socialists*

He told us, for instance, that the Italian Socialists were all united, or at least practically united. I always understood that there were two very distinct parties among the Italian Socialists—the Independent Socialists, and the Official Socialists—and that the Independent Socialists were as warm adherents of the war-like policy of Italy as any Italian subjects who could be found. I do not want to discuss the internal politics of an allied

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country, but I believe it to be an entire delusion to suppose that the weight of Italian Socialist opinion is of a pacifist description.

#### *The German Socialists*

He also seemed to be very confident as to the exact desire and policy of the German Socialists. I am sceptical. He said he knew exactly what Herr Scheidemann meant and said. It is very difficult to know what Herr Scheidemann means or wants, if you are only to go by what is reported in the press. He read out a statement—I do not know exactly where it came from—of the policy which I understood him to say was the policy of the German Socialist party as a whole. My recollection of Herr Scheidemann's speech is very much less definite than that. All I know about it, and all I know about the majority of the Socialists in Germany, is that so far they have supported their Government right through, that they have refused to condemn even the worst atrocities, and that they have made no protest against such things as the Armenian massacres ; and I see no reason whatever, so far as their public action is concerned, to distinguish between what they have done and said and what has been done and said by the rest of the German nation.

#### *The Russian Revolution*

There was one other observation which he made. He said that he thought that the agreement for the acquisition of Constantinople by Russia—I am not sure whether I apprehend him rightly, but he will correct me if I did not—was the origin of the Russian Revolution. I really cannot think that he meant that.

Mr. Snowden objected that what he did say was that the declaration by Trepoff in December of the secret treaty with regard to Constantinople was the first rumblings of the Revolution.

Lord Robert Cecil : According to my reading of what has happened in Russia, it would be difficult to imagine anything more grotesque. The hon. member then went on to ask the Government two questions.

*New Russia and Old Treaties*

The first question was : Are the old treaties—by which he means, I understand, the treaty concluded with Russia before the Revolution—still binding on this country ? Well, sir, they are binding upon this country. There is no doubt about that. It is, of course, possible for the new Russian Government to say that it does not wish that any particular engagement which we have undertaken on behalf of Russia shall be fulfilled. They can release the rest of the Allies from any particular undertaking ; but until that is done, we are bound in honour to carry out our engagements not only with Russia, but with the rest of the Allies. I should be very sorry indeed if there was any doubt thrown by any responsible politician in this country on that principle, which I regard as the foundation of good faith and the foundation of the possibility of sincere dealing between one country and another. I was asked—this is the real substance of what the hon. member and, indeed, all of those who support the amendment have said—do we accept the declared policy of the new Russian Government ? I am going to do my best to answer that. I want, in the first place, to say that I was exceedingly glad to hear from the hon. member for Leicester a very eloquent passage in which he described the work and methods of the Russian Revolutionists.

*H. M. Government and the Russian Revolution*

My colleagues who are more influential than I am have often expressed the feelings of the Government with regard to the Revolution. There is no difference in any part of the House in regard to that. Whatever there may be in store for Russia in history, she will, at any rate, have the credit of having carried through, by practically the unanimous wish, so far as an outsider is permitted to judge, of the whole of her people and of every class of her people, a revolution which has been stained with far less bloodshed than any movement comparable with it in size. I am anxious to make that clear, because, of course, in dealing with this declaration possibly some phrase might escape me which would appear to be a criticism. I am anxious to avoid any chance of that being said. It is quite true that the phrase which is thought to crystallize the new policy is the phrase, 'No annexation and no indemnity'.

*The meaning of 'Annexation'*

The hon. member for Leicester says that the word 'annexation' is a mistranslation, or at any rate a completely wrong version of what is meant. I am disposed, so far as I can form a judgement, to agree with him. But it is well to realize what the real policy of 'no annexation' would mean. Just consider what it really would mean. Take Arabia. Arabia has declared its independence from Turkey. I do not know whether that would amount to an annexation of territory. [An hon. member: 'That is independence!'] No but an being would suggest that we should use our power or influence to place Arabia again under the domination of Turkey.

*The Armenian Question*

Take Armenia. I do not know whether it is yet realized what Armenia really meant and what crimes were committed upon Armenia. Here is a statement which says :

'Of the 1,800,000 Armenians who were in the Ottoman Empire two years ago, 1,200,000 have been either massacred or deported. Those who were massacred died under abominable tortures, but they escaped the longer agonies of the deported. Men, women and children, without food or other provisions for the journey, without protection from the climate, regardless of age or weakness or disease, were driven from their homes and made to march as long as their strength lasted or until those who drove them drowned or massacred them in batches. Some died of exhaustion or fell by the way; some survived a journey of three months and reached the deserts and swamps along the middle Euphrates. There they have been abandoned and are dying now of starvation, disease and exposure.'

I am afraid they are dead now, because this was written some months ago.

'A recent report tells of a group of survivors at Abu Herrera, mostly women, children, and a few old men, who had been without food for seven days.'

Any change, even the most Imperialistic annexation, would be of benefit to the people who suffered such crimes as that. Take the case of Syria and Palestine. Although in Syria the numbers

are not so great, yet there, in substance, the same thing has taken place.

May I read to the House a description given by Dr. Hoskyns, the head of the American Mission at Beirut :

' His description of the situation was appalling and confirms all our reports : The people of the Lebanon and the Syrian Moslems subjected to an absolutely ruthless reign of terror since eight months ago, and being starved to death. A conservative estimate was 80,000 in the Lebanon killed in this way when Dr. Hoskyns left, and the rate of deaths was growing by geometrical progression. All the leading men deported, hanged, or in exile, with their properties confiscated and their relations in the hands of the Turks.'

I could read a great deal more. I have just been reading the same story quite recently about the Jewish population in Palestine. I confess I have some hesitation in denouncing annexation if it means, as one hon. member seemed to think it meant, that no territory which has been taken by force during this war is not to be restored to its original owners. If that is what is meant, then I am certainly unable to accept the policy of no annexation. If the phrase is used in the sense described by the hon. Member for Leicester, then I quite agree that a very different state of things arises, and, so far as I am concerned, I shall have very little objection to subscribing to the principle there enunciated.

#### *Germany as a Colonizing Power*

The favourite example referred to is that of the German African colonies. I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not say that we attacked the conquered German African colonies in order to rescue the native from misgovernment. We did it as part of the war against Germany. I do not say—because I have as profound a horror of war as any hon. members who have spoken—that it would have been right in any circumstances to go to war in order to rescue the African population from misgovernment by Germany. The horrors of war are so great that I should myself hesitate to recommend entering upon a war for that kind of purpose, because, on the whole, the balance of misery would probably be against it. But, having rescued them, are you to hand them back ? That is a very

different question which requires to be carefully considered. Just let me read one or two descriptions, because I am not sure that this is always realized. This, for instance, is from a description given to us this year as to the treatment of carriers in German East Africa :

'The treatment of carriers lately by the Germans has been terrible ; their carriers include our Indian soldier prisoners of war, and many wretched villagers, young boys, old men and women—in fact, they catch those who cannot run away. They chain them together and just work them until they die of starvation and exhaustion. In following upon Wahle's track from Walangali to Lupembe we kept finding dead and dying carriers. Nor after an action do they trouble any more about their wounded Askari, but just leave them to die.'

That is not the only case. I have here the admission of the state of things in German East Africa. I will not read it. It is very little different from what I have read. That is not the only thing. That is not anything new. That has always been the way the Germans have treated the natives. I will not weary the House with many quotations, but let me just read one more. This is one from a report made in 1909, long before the war, with regard to German South-West Africa.

'The great aim of German policy in German South-West Africa as regards the native, is to reduce him to a state of serfdom, and, where he resists, to destroy him altogether. The native, to the German, is a baboon and nothing more. The war against the Hereros, conducted by General Trotha, was one of extermination ; hundreds—men, women and children—were driven into desert country, where death from thirst was their end ; those left over are now in great locations near Windhuk, where they eke out a miserable existence ; labour is forced upon them and, naturally, unwillingly performed.'

'Again with the Hottentots—their treatment is still more barbarous, as the Germans are fully determined to root out that race, lock, stock and barrel. As one example of their treatment, I will quote what happened during the war on Shark Island. This small island was divided across by high

barbed wire, and as many Hottentot prisoners as could be got were shut in here. These literally died of starvation and exposure, and daily a wagon was sent across and returned laden with corpses.'

I do not know, of course, and it is impossible to say what we may not be forced to do at the end of the war, but if there is any measure of success, I confess I should regard with horror the idea of returning natives who have been freed from a government of that kind. These are the extreme cases. They are not the only cases.

#### *The Question of Poland and other Provinces*

What about Poland? I think we are all agreed that it is desirable to set up an independent Poland. Is there to be no annexation there? [An hon. member ejaculated : 'Freedom!'] Broadly I agree, if that is what you mean; but annexation has not that meaning in the English language, and we are discussing an English debate. I only want to get things perfectly clear. [Another hon. member pointed out that 'There is no word of annexation in the amendment'.] I am afraid the hon. member has not followed my argument. The hon. member for Blackburn will bear me out that he certainly said he thought it was conveniently summed up in the phrase, 'No annexation and no indemnity'. I will not elaborate the case of Poland, because we seem all to be agreed; but what about Alsace-Lorraine? Are you to say really that Germany, having taken two provinces from France, they shall not be restored. Take Italia irredenta. Are we really to commit ourselves to the proposition that, under no circumstances, would we restore to Italy provinces populated by Italians? I should regret any acceptance of short, misleading phrases. The hon. member [Mr. Whyte] referred to another phrase, 'No peace with the Hohenzollerns'. There is a great deal in that that is very attractive to any ordinary British mind, but at the same time I agree with him that it is too attractive to be quite true—at any rate, to be quite prudent as a definition of national policy. It is one thing to be against conquest which, without reason and against the will of the population, transfers territory from one sovereignty to another.

(Being asked if that principle will apply to Ireland, Lord

Robert Cecil replied that there is no purpose of transferring Ireland to another sovereignty.)

All I wish to press on my hon. friend below the Gangway and those who are attracted by these phrases is that, after all, it may be quite true, as I said just now, that it would not be a good ground to go to war to accomplish acts of justice and reparation such as I have described, yet, having attained them by war, it is quite a different thing to ask us to resign and abandon fruits which every one must recognize are in themselves desirable achievements. That is the limitation which I should wish to put upon my assent, as far as it is assent, to the phrase, 'No annexation'.

#### *The Question of Indemnity*

Then about no indemnity. I am not quite sure that I understand what is meant by that, but for us to talk about not wishing for any indemnity seems to me perhaps a little more difficult. What about Belgium? Does the hon. member say no indemnity for Belgium? [To this Mr. Snowden replied that Belgium must have not only restoration of its independence, but the restoration of all the damage that has been done.] Then what about Serbia? Does the hon. member's principle cover Serbia also? And what about the northern provinces of France? Those are all covered, I understand. Are we to rule out definitely all reparation for the destruction of peaceful merchant vessels by submarines? I am certainly not prepared to do that. Therefore I should like to know exactly what these phrases mean before I give my assent or the assent of the Government to their adoption. Then the hon. member said the Allied Governments should rewrite and issue a Note in very different terms, and he proceeded to give what appeared to me to be the description of the Note which I have read in German papers, but which is altogether at variance with the terms of the Note itself.

#### *M. Miliukoff's Note*

I have not got what M. Miliukoff said before me, and I should like to study it before I accept the interpretation of what he said. The Note only deals with this part of the question in a very few lines. I should like to know which of the statements

in what I am going to read are disagreed with by the hon. member :

'These war aims will only be set forth in detail, with all the compensations and equitable indemnities for harm suffered, at the moment of negotiation. But the civilized world knows that they imply, necessarily and first of all, the restoration of Belgium, Serbia and Montenegro, with the compensations due to them.'—

So far, I understand, there is no dispute.

'The evacuation of the invaded territories in France, in Russia, in Rumania, with just reparation.'—

No dispute yet, I imagine.

'The reorganization of Europe, guaranteed by a stable régime, and based at once on respect for nationalities and on the right to full security and liberty of economic development possessed by all peoples, small and great, and at the same time upon territorial conventions and international settlements such as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjustified attack: the restitution of provinces formerly torn from the Allies by force or against the wish of the inhabitants.'—

These are the general aims. I am waiting to hear whether the general aims are in dispute.

'The liberation of the Italians, as also of the Slavs, Rumanes, and Czechoslovaks from foreign domination.'—

All that is said is the liberation of these races from alien domination, and the setting free of the population subject to the bloody tyranny of the Turks.

#### *The Question of Turkey*

Then, I suppose, we come to the one statement which is objected to by the hon. member.

'and the turning out of Europe of the Ottoman Empire as decidedly foreign to Western civilization.'

I remember the time when it used to be one of the chief doctrines of the most progressive forces that the Turks were to go out bag and baggage, and it was only we benighted Tories who ever said anything for the Turks. We are all agreed that there

is nothing to be said for the Turks now, and if that is the only phrase—and that is the only one I can find—which the hon. member thinks conflicts with the general spirit of the declaration made by the Council of Workmen, I do not think there is any ground for saying there is any substantial difference of opinion between any of those who have spoken this afternoon. There is nothing new in this statement. It is a little more elaborate, but it was precisely the same as the celebrated statement of the right hon. gentleman [Mr. Asquith] that we would never sheathe the sword until Belgium recovered all and more than all she has sacrificed, until France was adequately secured against the menace of aggression, until the rights of the smaller nationalities were placed on an unassailable foundation, and until the military domination of Prussia was fully and finally destroyed. That is only the same thing stated more shortly than in the reply to President Wilson's Note, and that was all that we purported to say, as is actually stated in the Note itself.

#### *The Time for Negotiations*

Then the hon. member said we ought to enter upon negotiations. I thought my hon. friends answered very well that at this moment it would not be desirable for us to ask for terms of peace from Germany. There is a well-known French saying—it arose on a discussion with regard to capital punishment, and the reply was, 'Que messieurs les assassins commencent!'—let the murderers begin. But certainly, to judge from the German Chancellor's speech, there is no inclination on the part of the Germans even to state what terms of peace they are ready to accept. I am not going to say much about that speech. As far as I can see, what is happening in Germany now is what has happened in every domestic crisis in that country for the last forty or fifty years. We have had it over and over again. A popular movement, a popular demand for some reform or some act of justice, an appearance by the Government that they are going to yield or make terms; a protest, generally couched in very offensive terms, from the Junker party, and the immediate surrender by the Government to the Junkers. That appears to me to be exactly what has happened and what is the real meaning of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech in the Reichstag the other day [February 27, 1917], and

until that spirit has been exorcized from Germany it appears to me to be ludicrous, apart from its want of dignity, to suggest that we should ask for terms from the German Emperor. The hon. member [Mr. Snowden] said that Russia's mind was now on peace. I believe all our minds are on peace. There is no man who likes war, unless he is a lunatic fit only for an asylum.

*Peace must be on Just and Durable Terms*

But we, at any rate, of the Allies are determined not to accept a peace which will be no peace. It must be peace, just and durable. The hon. member spoke warmly of the project for a league of nations ; I am a great adherent of the idea of a league of nations, but before you can hope to establish such a league, before even in the most sanguine mind there can be the slightest expectation of its success, you must first establish a sound, just, equitable peace. The hon. member quoted some phrases about patriotism used by an hon. friend of mine. I think the last word on that subject was said by Miss Cavell when she was under sentence of death. She said, 'Patriotism is not enough.' I agree. You do not want less than patriotism. You want more. You want to add to it—and this must be the foundation of any peace that we make—justice, chivalry, respect for obligations, and respect for the weak ; and if we can secure a peace founded on those central doctrines, I shall be glad to co-operate with any hon. member of the House to erect what barriers may be possible against the recurrence of a devastating war such as this.

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